

MARCUS DODS:
WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE
TO HIS
TEACHING MINISTRY

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PREFACE

Today when the name of Marcus Dods is mentioned the first thought that comes to the minds of many is one that associates him either with a long probation or a heresy charge. Yet few facts pertaining to either of these experiences in his life are known. This is not surprising when we realize that a biography of this prominent Scotsman of the past has never been attempted nor is there much information about his life and work available in such volumes as the Dictionary of National Biography. It is the purpose of this study not only to shed light upon and interpret the significance of these two aspects of Dods' career, but also to focus attention upon his teaching ministry as the unifying feature of his life. It is in this way that we can determine his particular contributions to the nineteenth century church in Scotland.

Indebtedness is gratefully acknowledged to many for their guidance and interest in the preparation of this work: to the Rev. Professor William S. Tindal, O.B.E., D.D., under whose supervision this project was undertaken, for his invaluable counsel; to the Reverend Dr. John Alexander Lamb, Ph.D., D.D., F.S.A. (Scotland), for patient and efficient assistance during the preparation and writing of the thesis; to the late Very Reverend E.J. Hagan, D.D., former student of Marcus Dods, who graciously granted me an interview July 21, 1955; to the late

Very Reverend Andrew N. Bogle, D.D., former student of Marcus Dods and personal friend of the Dods family, for an informative interview July 19, 1955; and to the Reverend James G.K. Brotherton, B.D., minister of St. John's-Renfield Church, Glasgow, who secured permission for me to consult the records of Renfield Free Church for the years 1864-1889 and who graciously offered hospitality on several occasions.

I am particularly indebted to the late Reverend Dr. A. Herbert Gray, D.D., son-in-law and former student of Marcus Dods, and to his wife, the late Mary Dods Gray, only daughter of Marcus Dods. Dr. and Mrs. Gray kindly entertained me in their London home on July 23, 1955, and not only shared with me their personal recollections of Marcus Dods but allowed me free access to his personal papers, books, photographs, press cuttings, and other memorabilia. Since their death, Mr. Arthur Alexander Gray, grand-son of Marcus Dods, has been extremely helpful in furnishing additional information and in allowing access to the family collection of Dods manuscripts, letters and other papers.

Acknowledgement must also be made of the courtesy and the assistance extended by the staffs of the following libraries: New College Library, Edinburgh; University of Edinburgh Library; Register House, Edinburgh; National Library of Scotland, Edinburgh; Public Library, Edinburgh; Mitchell Library, Glasgow; Trinity College Library, Glasgow; Presbyterian Historical Foundation Library, Montreat, North Carolina; and Library of Union Theological Seminary, Richmond, Virginia.

The spelling, punctuation, and grammar throughout this thesis, with the exception of direct quotations which are true to the sources, follow standard American usage.

Sterling J. Edwards, Jr.

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CHAPTER ONE

THE EARLY LIFE OF MARCUS DODS : 1834-1864

Between the age of twelve and the age of thirty, a man's future is determined, his opinions formed if not fixed, his character moulded almost beyond alteration, his aims in life chosen. To understand a man's after-life you have but to know how he spent these years; where his thoughts were then; what influences he came under and so forth.¹

A complete account of the life of Marcus Dods has never been written. During his lifetime, various resumés were published in periodicals, but these accounts lacked accuracy and detail. The most important period of his life--the probation years--remained concealed throughout the nineteenth century because Dods' own silence regarding his probation meant that no reliable information was available prior to the posthumous publication of his early letters in 1910. Therefore, this chapter is devoted to his early life, with the most detailed treatment being given to his hitherto little known and little understood probation years.

His own letters and other writings supplied the major sources from which this chapter was drawn. Extensive use was also made of numerous periodicals of the late nineteenth century.

1. Marcus Dods Lectures (MSS. in the New College Library, New College, Edinburgh), "Gospels I," p. 6.

I. HIS YOUTH

When Marcus Dods was born in Belford, Northumberland, England, on the eleventh of April, 1834, his father, the Rev. Marcus Dods, had been minister of the Scottish Church there for twenty-three years. Although separated geographically from most of his fellow Scottish ministers, the Rev. Mr. Dods was well known and highly esteemed by many ecclesiastical leaders of his day. This was partly due to the publication of his book, On the Incarnation of the Eternal Word.¹ His name also became known through his contribution to The Christian Instructor, a periodical which he himself edited for a brief period.²

The manse in Belford was a busy household under the able management of Sarah Palliser Dods of Northumberland, who, in addition to caring for her seven children, provided lodgings for several of the young boys whom Mr. Dods tutored along with his own. Part of the house was used as a schoolroom, making the members of the Dods family always close to one another in

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1. Marcus Dods, On the Incarnation of the Eternal Word (second edition; London: Seeley, Burnside & Seeley, 1849).
 2. Marcus Dods, M.A. (ed.), Early Letters of Marcus Dods, D.D. 1850-1864 (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1910), p. 13; Patrick Carnegie Simpson, "Dr. Marcus Dods: A Record and an Appreciation," The British Monthly, 4:181, March, 1904.

a very literal sense. The lack of toys and children's books in the home was compensated for partially by the variety of playmates each child had at his disposal. As the youngest child, Marcus was the object of much attention and affection.

Only four years of his life were spent in Belford, for when his father died in 1838, Mrs. Dods moved with her three sons and four daughters¹ to Edinburgh where she could maintain her family by taking schoolboys as boarders. A few years after coming to Edinburgh, she selected as her home Ramsay Lodge, which was one of the few residences located between the castle and the site where, in 1846, the Free Church began construction of its new Divinity School, known as New College. The proximity of this institution is noteworthy in that part of its facilities were used also as a place of worship by the Free High Church congregation of which Mrs. Dods and her family were members.² This meant that the influence of the Divinity College was brought nearer to all those of the Dods household by their weekly visits to the worship services and by their contacts with the professors, the professors' children, the New College students and others of the college who worshipped there.

Family Influences.

Mrs. Dods did much to encourage a wholesome and serious spiritual life among her children. Each Sunday after dinner

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1. Her children were: Anne, John, Thomas, Mary, Marcia, Andrea, and Marcus.
 2. Prior to the Disruption in 1843, the Dods family worshipped in St. Giles' Cathedral with one of the three congregations meeting there. After the Disruption they withdrew with the "Free" congregation and worshipped in the Music Hall until the Free High Church was built. Early Letters, p. 20.

she would gather them around her for the learning of Psalms and the weekly Bible lesson. All the children were then asked to write notes on the sermon which they had heard that morning. Fast-days were very much like Sundays in the Dods home, with the one exception that the children were permitted to read "everyday" books. This meant that they were not to play any games, or disturb the older people in any way. Even letters could not be written nor the piano played.¹ During the week Mrs. Dods usually assumed full responsibility for leading the daily family prayers and devotions.

Though no specific mention is made by Marcus concerning the causes or motives which led to his decision to enter the ministry, the influence of his mother is nevertheless apparent. This is seen more clearly in later years, when, as a probationer, he contemplated leaving the ministry. His reasons for rejecting this idea were partially disclosed in a letter to his sister Marcia:

Many things make me desire to be a preacher. The great reasons weigh with me; then surely Mamma would like it, and when I think of all₂ she did for this end I do strongly desire to get a church.²

Along with the influence of his mother, mention should be made of that exerted by his sister Mary. Being the second oldest child, Mary's mature judgment was highly respected by the younger members of the family, especially since she had trained herself in Greek, Latin, Hebrew and general Bible

1. Marcus Dods, M.A., op. cit., p. 21.

2. Ibid., p. 174.

knowledge.¹ When her position as a governess required that she should move to Manchester in 1844, young Marcus continued to seek her guidance and counsel by mail. As his interest in religious matters grew, he acknowledged his indebtedness to Mary for the part she and her prayers had played in this growth.²

His sister Andrea was exceedingly helpful to him, too, but the one member of the family who ultimately proved to be his most intimate companion and spiritual confidant was his sister Marcia, whose exemplary Christian life earned the perpetual praise, admiration, and love of Marcus.³ Her piety, wisdom, and unselfishness became more apparent to him when, in 1855, they shared a small flat as the only members of the Dods family remaining in Edinburgh. This brief period of dependence upon one another heightened an already established relationship, causing it to blossom into a mutual love and respect seldom enjoyed by brother and sister.⁴ To Marcia he revealed his innermost feelings and doubts in a way that he would not do to any other.⁵ Fortunately, Marcia saved and permitted to be published most of the letters she received from her brother, thereby providing an insight into their relationship as well as a broad view of the subjects he discussed with her. Great benefit was derived from this wholesome and intimate friendship

1. Ibid., pp. 29, 114.

2. Ibid., pp. 26, 28, 33, 37.

3. Ibid., pp. 157, 167, 162, 169, 171, 181.

4. Ibid., pp. 122, 128, 157, 162, 185.

5. Ibid., p. 103.

with Marcia, especially in the uninhibited literary expressiveness which it prompted. Marcus freely shared his thoughts with her, assuming that she would always be understanding and encouraging. Seldom, if ever, did she disappoint him in this respect.¹ In one expression of gratitude he said, "You are the most encouraging of persons; each of your letters does more good than its precursor."² Four weeks later he added, "So far from thinking you the most unsympathizing of sisters, I would challenge all sisterdom to produce a more sympathizing, or one who sympathizes to better purpose."³ On another occasion, he expressed his appreciation of her more fully:

You do not at all know...the full pleasure... of receiving a letter, for you never received one from yourself...Let me say "What a brick you are!" and what masses of good you have made over to me...in your lifetime, nuggets more precious than those of Australia -- of high spirits, hope, energy, calmness and the breaking up of a rocky heart to flow into pleasant affection for every one. This is not sentiment, it is truth. It is my view of you as seen by heart and mind, alone here as I sit, where paltry sense cannot distort.⁴

The "in-laws" who became a part of the Dods family brought an additional enrichment to the cultural and religious influences surrounding the children of Ramsay Lodge. The Rev. George Wilson, who later married Mary, first became associated with the Dods family through the marriage of his sister to Thomas Dods in 1848. In succeeding years many letters were exchanged between Marcus

1. Ibid., p. 162, 169, 171, 179.

2. Ibid., p. 171.

3. Ibid., p. 179.

4. Ibid., p. 157.

and Mr. Wilson indicating a friendship that was much appreciated by the former, especially in the tutorial interests which Mr. Wilson manifested toward Marcus.¹

Mr. Charles Gibson, husband of Anne, made a significant contribution also. He invited the entire Dods family to spend their holidays on his farm in Foulden West Mains. For many years this provided Marcus with a new freedom in outdoor living which apparently had a liberating effect on him. "It would be almost impossible," wrote his sister Marcia, "to overestimate the influence those holidays had in the making of the boy Marcus. It was his first taste of the free, active, open air life of the country, and nothing he had ever enjoyed could come up to it."²

The indoor life at the farm was no less stimulating, for in the evenings Mr. Gibson would read aloud from such favorites as Cowper, Johnson, Macaulay, Carlyle, and Scott, making them come alive for the entertainment and benefit of his guests. At the age of twenty-three Marcus spoke of Mr. Gibson as "the only person who was anything like a father to my boyhood."³

Thus, in early life Marcus Dods was surrounded by congenial relatives whose religious and cultural interests established an atmosphere conducive to the characteristics which could be seen emerging in Marcus throughout his adolescent years -- humility, humor, kindness, independence and liberality of thought, piety,

1. Ibid., p. 52.

2. Ibid., p. 21.

3. Ibid., p. 90.

openmindedness, industry, inquisitiveness. Some of these qualities were more conspicuous than others but they all revealed themselves in his earlier letters and works. The less desirable features of his personality made their appearance in the form of taciturnity, lack of confidence, introspection, and indecisiveness.

Scholastic Interests.

Neither his thirst for knowledge nor his superior scholastic abilities were particularly apparent during his very early years. However, when he transferred to the Edinburgh Academy at the age of nine his innate talents were greatly challenged and stimulated.¹ As a result, he soon developed a proficiency in literature and classical languages, which his teachers recognized by awarding him prizes in Latin, Greek, and literature.² This was the foundation upon which he ultimately built a life distinguished in all three fields.

Upon graduating from the Academy in 1848 at the age of fourteen Marcus became an employee of the National Bank of Scotland. Although this position left him little time for study, the habits and tastes acquired at the Academy lingered with such intensity that he soon found himself spending most of his spare time in the pursuit of spiritual and intellectual knowledge. His typical day during this stage was as follows: He awoke at 6:00 a.m. and began his day with the reading of the Bible and prayer. This was followed by thirty or forty minutes of study in classical Latin or Greek, a brief run in the garden, and breakfast. By nine

1. Ibid., p. 82.

2. Ibid., p. 178.

o'clock he was at the National Bank of Scotland's head office in St. Andrew Square. Home again by 5:30 p.m., he enjoyed a leisurely meal with the others of his household, after which he engaged in the study of Homer or Roman History from 7:30 until 9:00 and Hume or John Foster's Essays from 9:00 until 10:30. Prayers came just before retiring at 11:15 p.m.¹ A letter to his sister Mary one month after his sixteenth birthday discloses his enjoyment of this practice which others might have considered tedious or restrictive:

I have been studying very hard at night...I can, however, look back upon a good deal of Greek and Latin with triumph. What a great amount of pleasure and real happiness it gives a person² to see himself gaining daily more and more knowledge....²

His interest in these languages was augmented when Mrs. Dods received John Macphail into her home as a boarder, for Mr. Macphail often studied the classics with young Marcus in the mornings.³ It was during Mr. Macphail's period of residence with the Dods that Marcus began to express an enlarging interest in God and His redemptive work, which might indicate a further influence of John Macphail.⁴ In any case, this contact with "Mr. John," as Marcus called him, developed into a life-long relationship with the Macphail family, as manifested by the intimate friendships which evolved between Marcus and John's two brothers, James and Simeon, who also became ministers of the Free Church.

1. Ibid., pp. 26-7.

2. Ibid., p. 27.

3. Ibid., p. 27.

4. Ibid., p. 28.

Of much greater significance than the friendship with John Macphail was the acquaintance which Marcus had with Mr. John Millar, Classical tutor at New College, who met with Marcus on Friday evenings for the purpose of polishing his classical style.¹ It was during these sessions that Mr. Millar, whom Dods regarded as one of the most efficient teachers he had ever known, introduced him to some effective methods of self-education. Among other things he counselled Dods to read each week one chapter of John Foster's Essays and the following week to write what he remembered of it. "As a discipline in attentive reading, in memory, and in composition," wrote Dods years later, "this was valuable, but as an introduction to Foster, no words of mine can explain the influence it had upon my mental attitude and habits of thought."²

Student Days at University of Edinburgh.

After two years of employment with the bank, Marcus made his decision to enter the ministry of the Free Church of Scotland and matriculated at the University of Edinburgh in the autumn of 1850. When his application for a bursary was turned down, he chose to earn money by tutoring in the evenings two boys from Stirling who boarded with Mrs. Dods at Ramsay Lodge. Following his resignation from the bank he immediately plunged into a self-imposed schedule of ten hours of study a day in order to prepare himself better for the work he was to do at the University. He humorously alluded

1. Ibid., p. 29.

2. W.E. Gladstone and others, Books Which Have Influenced Me (London: British Weekly Extras, 1887), pp. 107-8. A more detailed account of Foster's influence is given on pages 33-4 of this thesis.

to the effects of this rigid intellectual exercise in a letter to his sister Marcia, "You've no idea how deep I'm getting, in fact it's quite alarming lest I tumble in and drown myself some fine morning."¹ This faithful study proved highly profitable and he found his classes in advanced Latin and Greek very easy, thereby leaving him more time to devote to the mastery of other subjects.² He greatly enjoyed all his courses of study at the University, with the possible exception of mathematics. Among the classes he attended during his second year were trigonometry, psychology, perspective, Thucydides, French, and German.³ In his fourth year he studied natural philosophy, mechanics, Plato, and exegesis of the Greek Testament.⁴

His dependence on God was a distinctive aspect of his life during University years as can be seen in a letter written in his second year:

I find daily that without prayer everything else is nothing, even reading the Bible, and prayer itself I feel to be profitless unless with the Spirit's assistance to let me feel my wants and make them known unto Him who I feel is more ready to supply me with spiritual blessings than I am to ask them.⁵

His private devotions at this time included a chapter from the Septuagint each morning and a chapter from the Greek New Testament each evening.⁶

1. Marcus Dods, M.A., op. cit., p.29

2. Ibid., p. 31.

3. Ibid., p. 33.

4. Ibid., pp.52-3.

5. Ibid., p. 33.

6. Ibid., p. 33.

Social and other distinctions during the four years at the University were few. This was due partly to the time-consuming tutorial work being done at home and partly to his own retiring nature which made it difficult for him to assert himself or to participate voluntarily in large group activities. However, his days at the University displayed a note of optimism and a freedom from subjectivity that were not always so pronounced in the ensuing years. During the summer prior to his fourth year he could submit the following wise words of advice to J.C. Stewart, a friend whom he met at the National Bank of Scotland:

You...think the world has used you ill, and this subject I would have you avoid, as it is certain to make you a cold, dry piece of timber. Think the best of everybody, old boy, and they will think and do the best for you, no fear. Throw a little tinder from yourself into the old world, and it will crackle and blaze and become quite jolly upon it. Every one gets hard knocks, no doubt, but the only plan is to duck, and then they either miss you altogether, or only inflict a very slight tap, a sort of admonitory thing to quell the boisterous within one. But, my dear Giles, I'm sure we would put up with everything far more manfully, reasonably, and advantageously, if we only considered that this world and all its buffets is for no other end than that we may, by some trial of our strength in resisting the temptation to repine and so on, be made perfect for the full enjoying of God. It's a beautiful system altogether, notwithstanding the Fall.¹

Enjoyment of Teaching.

There were few regrets over the need to divide his time between teaching and studying,² for he liked the sharing of knowledge as much as he did the acquiring of knowledge. In fact, his enjoyment of teaching grew to such an extent during the summer

1. Ibid., p. 36. See also pp. 68-9.

2. Ibid., pp. 52-3.

of 1853, when he moved to Bruckley Castle, Aberdeenshire, as a tutor to the sons of a Captain Fordyce, that he could write to J.C. Stewart:

I am of late taking amazingly to teaching, and am even beginning to think my proper sphere to be that of the pedagogue--a leader of youth--a splendid idea, but how few (none) fulfil it. I can't conceive any finer position for a man in this life than to be surrounded by a swarm of young fellows, who may be of eminent service to their country,¹ and who can by proper training live to the glory of God.

Teaching became so attractive to him that he frankly admitted to Marcia that it might replace the ministry as his life's aim:

What do you expect to be if you live? I'm thinking of turning pedagogue. It's a splendid thing, and I don't think I could be a minister as I ought. I've been thinking a great deal about this lately. I would have a widowed feeling if I was to be anything else but a minister, but I must see that this be not mere imagination.²

"A teacher of youth seems to me now to be a most enviable personage," he confided to his sister Mary immediately following his graduation from Divinity College, when he was feeling his first pangs of discouragement about the ministry. "And the worst of it is," he continued, "I am not so thoroughly convinced that this is wrong as to make me at once resist the idea." This undiminishing love of teaching was to find expression in many ways in succeeding years through the publication of numerous writings, through his didactic preaching and finally as a professor

1. Ibid., pp. 43-4.

2. Ibid., p. 47.

of New Testament Exegesis at New College.

His teaching ability was responsible for his first trip abroad which took place shortly after he received his M.A. degree from the University of Edinburgh in 1854. Captain Fordyce, in taking his family to Paris for the summer, invited Marcus to go with them. Mr. Fordyce greatly admired Marcus as a teacher, having sent three of his sons the previous winter to live with Mrs. Dods so that Marcus could continue to tutor them.¹ In Paris part of their day was filled with classes in Latin, Greek, algebra, Euclid, logic, metaphysics, and moral philosophy, while the afternoons were often spent in sightseeing.

Exceptional Reading Habits.

Dods' early training in teaching and in the communication of ideas greatly sharpened his ability to present material in a lucid and pertinent manner. It also gave him more of an incentive to digest and master that which he read in order that he could communicate it clearly and accurately. Rarely was he satisfied to read a book just once, because he felt that many authors could not be properly understood until read a second or third time. "I find," he said, "that is the case with most of my reading; I am slow to take up or take in at the first reading, and need to come back and reflect before I see what other people seem to see at first sight."² His refusal to be superficial in reading can be noted

1. Ibid., p. 46.

2. Ibid., p. 365.

in a letter in which he wrote, "As you may imagine, I've read almost all of Henry Martyn,...much of it I have read and re-read and diffused through me."¹ Actually, he would read Homer, Horace, Thucydides, Augustine, Shakespeare, Browning, Foster, and others repeatedly year after year in order to gain a more detailed grasp of each writer's thought.² He was not exaggerating when he wrote at the age of seventy to his daughter, "Lately I have been devoting myself after dinner to Horace and Shakespeare, who really stand the fiftieth reading quite as well as the first."³

This thoroughness in reading developed in him a keen discernment rarely found among young scholars. It also gave him a lofty standard of reading which few attain. His standard is tersely stated in a letter to Marcia written when he was twenty-five:

By the way, what horribly heterodox ideas you have about reading; you might as well want to taste today in your mouth all the dinners you had ever eaten as wish to remember all the ideas you had ever had. Thank you, no. They have given you strength; following an argument gave you some additional ability, and though the memory of it is gone, the ability is not, unless you have turned lazy since, which you have not.

But I wish I had time to write you about this, for it is one of the few things I have clear opinions of my own about. Believe this, that very, very few people can read; almost everybody can read history, travel, science (objective instruction), but very few can read books calculated to strengthen their own minds, to increase their subjective power -- such books as Butler, Foster, and scores more. Many can understand them thoroughly

1. Ibid., p. 102.

2. Ibid., pp. 102, 245.

3. Marcus Dods, M.A. (ed.), Later Letters of Marcus Dods, D.D. 1895-1909 (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1911), p. 169.

and answer any questions on them, but they can do this without having themselves thought through what the author has thought; now you must do this if you would acquire some permanent good from the thought of another; they must not remain his, they must become yours, not ideas which you have got from him but thoughts you have thought for yourself (under his guidance of course). Ponder this, and I believe it will do you good.¹

As a professor he emphasized this same method of reading to his students at New College. "In order to understand the New Testament or any other book," he explained, "we must put ourselves as far as possible alongside the writer, and as far as possible interpret his words with the aid of his mental habits and conceptions of the world."² Dods himself consistently applied this principle to all his reading, whether for pleasure or for purposes of review and study, thereby acquiring for himself a habit which rarely fails to produce a profound scholar.³

Student at New College.

In the autumn of 1854 Marcus Dods entered New College to begin his theological studies under such men as Principal Cunningham; Dr. John Duncan, Professor of Hebrew Language and Old Testament Exegesis; Dr. James Buchanan, Professor of Systematic Theology; Dr. Fleming, Professor of Natural Science; Dr. Bannerman, Professor of Theology (Apologetics); Dr. George Smeaton, Professor of Exegetical Theology.

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1. Marcus Dods, M.A. (ed.), Early Letters, p. 152.
 2. Marcus Dods Lectures (MSS. in the New College Library, Edinburgh), "The Apocrypha," p. 1.
 3. Marcus Dods, M.A. (ed.) Later Letters, pp. 24, 25, 108, 214.

(New Testament); and Dr. A. Campbell Fraser, Professor of Logic.¹ As a first year student Dods was impressed not only by his professors but by his fellow students. Years afterwards when Dods became Principal of New College, he told the students, "I still [at the age of seventy-three] recall the feelings of awe with which I regarded the men of the fourth year, Bruce, and Veitch, and James Macgregor and A.B. Davidson."² Dods' own class was no ordinary one. In fact, Principal Cunningham is reported to have regarded his year as the strongest which had come under him.³ It included James O. Dykes, who later became Principal of Westminster College, Cambridge; John Laidlaw, who eventually became a Professor at New College; R.J. Sandeman, ultimately senior minister of St. Andrew's United Free Church, Edinburgh; John G. Cunningham who did commendable work at St. Luke's United Free Church, Edinburgh; and Richard Stothert who entered the mission field.

A fellow student recorded his impressions of Dods during those days:

Among his fellows he was known as a tall dark and scholarly student, refined, reserved and even shy in manner, courteous, kindly and witty in conversation, but

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1. The College Calendar for the Free Church of Scotland 1868-69 (Edinburgh: William Paterson, 1868), pp. 15-25; The College Calendar for the Free Church of Scotland 1889-90 (Edinburgh: Macniven & Wallace, 1889), pp. xi-xiii.
 2. Dods, Lecture MS., "Welcoming Address to Students, 1907," p. 1.
 3. Patrick Carnegie Simpson, "Dr. Marcus Dods: A Record and an Appreciation," The British Monthly, 4:183, March, 1904. Alexander Whyte also said, "I suppose his was the best class for ability and scholarship and industry the New College has ever seen." Former Principals of the New College, Edinburgh (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1909), p. 48.

also calm, cheerful and apparently unburdened -- certainly the farthest of us all from egotism of any kind or degree. None of us knew what he felt within the "smooth shelving sides" of that pit into which young men on their way to high usefulness (in Egypt or elsewhere) are sometimes cast.¹

After seeing her son through his first year at the Divinity College, Mrs. Dods moved to Anick Grange, Hexham, where she resided with her son Thomas until her death in December, 1859. Since Marcus and Marcia could not join her there, they decided to maintain their own flat in Edinburgh. The closing of Mrs. Dods' boarding house also terminated the convenient arrangement which Marcus had for tutoring some of her boarders. Therefore, to be assured of an income during the ensuing years at New College he accepted a part-time position in the Signet Library. Few positions could have been more suitable to the young theologian. To be surrounded by so many books was a delight and an inspiration to him:

My two hours in the library is as good as a holiday, and gives me a relief. It's so jolly to sit in my cell surrounded by old tomes, with no one to tell me that I am a nuisance and a useless old hulk. It's a perpetual meditation to sit in the hall filled with the labours of mind since the beginning of the world; it teaches one to realise the shortness of life compared to the extent of things to be known; and at the same time excites one to make the most of one's few years, by showing what others have done.²

With very little spare time at his disposal, Dods had to confine his extra-curricular activities to membership in the Exegetical Society, thereby taking no part in the Theological

1. Marcus Dods, M.A. (Ed.) Early Letters, p. vi. Name of the writer of these words withheld by the editor.

2. Ibid., p. 79.

Society or other student groups of the University.¹ It is not difficult to see the appeal of the Exegetical Society which provided a further opportunity to share and nurture his grasp of Biblical languages. His aptitude for languages served to enrich his friendship with such men as Richard Stothert and John Cunningham who liked to study with him whenever languages were involved.² Of course there were still weaknesses in his linguistic style, especially in his Latin composition, which he willingly acknowledged. Principal Cunningham, for whom Dods had a growing love and admiration, was very helpful to him in this respect, guiding him into a better use and mastery of Latin.³ This same professor was also aware of Dods' competence as a budding scholar and did not hesitate to commend him on his thoroughness and on his ability to bring a great deal of material to bear on research discourses.⁴

The few surviving comments which Dods made about his professors reveal very little. "I enjoy his Dr. Cunningham's class very much," he wrote, "but find Dr. Buchanan painfully prolix. However, there are some very fine passages in his lectures, and I think his course is in itself more uninteresting than Cunningham's. Dr. Duncan is going through Job just now, and gives some most valuable notes, a good many queer stories,

1. Ibid., p. 91; Simpson, loc. cit.

2. Early Letters, p. 83; Simpson, loc. cit.

3. Early Letters, p. 75.

4. Ibid., pp. 74-5.

and a great quantity of minor matter difficult to carry away."¹

Rather than join his mother in Anick Grange during the summer between his second and third year at New College, he remained in Edinburgh to continue his part-time work at the Signet Library and to resume his teaching. Unfortunately, his four-hour-a-day tutoring schedule proved to be one of his few unenjoyable teaching experiences, primarily because his students were neither highly gifted nor well disciplined.²

Certain tendencies and traits could be seen taking shape during his years in New College. His letters of that period show how his keen sense of humor was already a leavening influence in his personality.³ His kindness and charitableness began to permeate his writings.⁴ His command of the English language, enhanced by his studies in five other tongues, also began to display its versatile powers.

II. PERIOD OF PROBATION

In almost every published account of the life of Marcus Dods, whether a brief newspaper article or an abbreviated encyclopedia sketch, or a lengthy magazine version, his long period of probation is mentioned, but no details are given to indicate what transpired during those years. When his early

1. Ibid., p. 73.

2. Ibid., p. 82.

3. Ibid., pp. 90, 95, 109, 110.

4. Ibid., pp. 152, 70, 75, 83, 88, 89, 90, 91.

literary accomplishments are mentioned, omissions and errors invariably occur.¹ Yet, his activities during this "famous" period of his life are no longer a secret, owing to the posthumous publication of his early letters in 1910 under the editorship of his son. In order to give a full and more accurate picture of this vitally important, hitherto unemphasized, phase of his life, a detailed account has been undertaken here. Consideration will first be given to the more general aspects of the probation followed by a chronological survey of his work during this stage of his life.

First Indications of Long Probation.

After completing his studies at New College in the spring of 1858, Marcus Dods entered the most trying phase of his life-- a probation which extended over a period of five years and eleven months. The first hints of this impending ordeal came in July 1858 when he preached in Abington as a candidate for the first time:

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1. E.g. P.C. Simpson (The British Monthly, 4:184), who wrongly surmised Dods' probation to be of seven years duration, attributed to this period his editorship of "the complete works of Augustine," which did not begin until 1871 (seven years after Dods was in Glasgow), and his Epistles to the Seven Churches which was not published until 1867. A.B. Bruce (Biblical World, 7:247) omitted Dods' translation of Augustine's Manual of Devotion. The Encyclopaedia Britannica made the following mistakes in its brief account of his life: 1) "Having studied theology for five years..." (four) 2) "Several of his writings, especially a sermon on Inspiration delivered in 1878..." (1877) 3) "In the Expositor's Bible Series he edited Genesis and I Corinthians..." (W.R. Nicoll was the editor. Dods wrote Genesis, the Gospel of John and First Corinthians). See The Encyclopaedia Britannica, eleventh ed., VIII, 373.

I did not get on at Abington well; the people did not seem to care to attend, except one or two, and then when I did succeed in getting one or two to listen, they looked with such critical, doubtful, unreceptive air that put me out in no small degree.¹

The following week he was in Flisk, a small rural community located near Cupar, Fife, where he had an equally discouraging experience.² So disheartened was he by this response to his preaching that he permitted a cloud of doubt to drift over his thoughts about the ministry as his life's calling:

I think I would get over this rapidity of speech soon were I once settled and knew the people, but meanwhile it is a form of misery hard to bear, which makes me seriously and often consider whether it would not be better to rest content with teaching as my calling, and leave the sublimer occupation for those who are better qualified.³

This hovering cloud of doubt was not completely dispersed until, almost six years later, he received his first call to a Scottish church. Before that call came from the Renfield Free Church in Glasgow in June, 1864, Dods preached in twenty-three churches as a candidate. It is not difficult to see how doubts might come to a man who was constantly denied admittance into the position for which he had prepared himself so diligently for eight years.

What were the causes of these rejections? What factors were responsible for the hesitation on the part of so many congregations to accept this highly capable young man? And even more important, what kept Dods so faithful in his pursuit of the

1. Early Letters, p. 94.

2. Ibid., p. 96.

3. Ibid.

ministry while facing such discouragement and doubt?

Unpopular Style of Preaching.

His habits in the pulpit were initially responsible for Dods' lack of popular appeal to those who heard him for the first time. He was utterly dependent upon his manuscript.¹ He read his sermons from beginning to end, remaining motionless while doing so.² This often gave the false impression that he was more like a lifeless, impassionate automaton than a man with a vital, relevant message.³ His reading style was not of the most pleasing sort either. He found it difficult to vary his tone as he moved from point to point.⁴ Dods himself was aware of this monotonous tone and humorously wrote after preaching in Kennethmont, "I...preached to them as if I had been thirty years their minister, and was getting rather tired of the berth. A lot slept..."⁵ Dods' closest friends were gracious and frank in their talks with him about his pulpit style and its effects. A. Taylor Innes, who became a lawyer of the first rank, was one such friend.⁶ Another was Alexander Whyte, a student at New College during much of Dods' probation, and later one of Scotland's foremost preachers. Rather than finding encouragement from them, Dods

1. Ibid., pp. 381, 174.

2. Ibid., p. 381. Alexander Whyte recalled that the first time he ever saw Dods "he was standing in an Aberdeen pulpit as erect as a pillar of Aberdeen granite, as stately and as motionless," Former Principals of New College, p. 45.

3. Ibid., pp. 380-1

4. Simpson, op. cit., p. 186; Henry Drummond, "Prof. Marcus Dods," The Expositor, 3rd Series, 10:69-70, 1889.

5. Early Letters, p. 175.

6. Ibid., p. 251.

tended to feel even more discouraged because of his inability to change.¹ Few alterations were made, even in succeeding years. Henry Drummond alluded to this consistency when Dods was elected to the New College Chair of New Testament Exegesis at the age of fifty-five:

Though Dr. Dods' pulpit style and delivery have changed in no essential respect with time, he has lived to be regarded by many competent judges as the very foremost preacher of his Church.²

Part of the explanation for this inner fixation was revealed by Dods himself years later in an address on preaching which he delivered to the students of the Free Church College, Glasgow in 1880:

In my college days the prevalent ambition was to be foremost in study; and a number of thoroughly good students were formed. But along with this laudable ambition there existed something verging on contempt of the popular preacher. We respected a man who had a great deal in him; but if he was able to bring it out, and had not only much that was worth saying, but could say it in a worthy manner, and so that people were compelled to listen and believe, we regarded him with some measure of suspicion.³

With popular preaching relegated to such a low, almost contemned, level it is not difficult to see how conscientious students like Dods developed a strong aversion to the idea of becoming popular preachers themselves. During his student days Dods' favorite preacher was Robert Rainy of the Free High Church who was

1. Ibid., pp. 174, 122, 282.

2. Henry Drummond, "Prof. Marcus Dods," The Expositor, 3rd Series, 10:67, 1889.

3. Marcus Dods, Erasmus and Other Essays (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1891), p. 317. Cf. Early Letters, p. 244.

considered by many of his hearers as having a "style heavy and dry."¹ Rainy could easily have unconsciously influenced Dods' preaching style, for Dods greatly admired him. He recorded his impressions of Rainy's preaching in these words:

Certainly he did not strive nor cry. But if spiritual vision counts for anything in preaching, if religious imagination that saw the whole comedy and pathos of human life in the light of God's patience and love, if profoundest reverence and simplest faith, if the most far-reaching and uncommon thoughts expressed in commonest words count for anything--then I should say we had no preacher at all on the same level. I listened to him Sunday after Sunday during the whole of his ministry in Edinburgh.²

Another factor responsible for Dods' adherence to such an unpopular style of preaching is found also in the realm of psychological influences. His personality could not easily bow to the requirements of the pulpit. His shy, retiring nature always preferred small gatherings rather than large crowds. He became uncomfortable when a group exceeded three or four.³ Lacking an assertive spirit, he would spend many days without speaking to anyone if external circumstances did not require it.⁴ Upon entering the pulpit where it was his responsibility to lead numerous people in worship, he experienced the same discomfort,

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1. Patrick Carnegie Simpson, The Life of Principal Rainy (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1909), I, p. 128. Cf. Early Letters, p. 251.
 2. Dods, Lecture MS., "Welcoming Address to Students, 1907," pp. 2-3. Cf. Simpson, The Life of Principal Rainy, I, p. 129.
 3. After two years' probationship, he wrote Marcia: "I am not getting any better at addressing people. I can read to them, and I can write, but it's not in my nature to speak to more than two." Early Letters, p. 174.
 4. An example of this is given in consecutive letters to Marcia in February, 1863: "You can't imagine how few people I speak to. Today for instance, not a soul but Beshie." "Few are so alone as I am, for my business during the day does not bring me into contact with anybody." Early Letters, p. 262.

the same reticence, and the same awkwardness as he did when facing a large social gathering. The resulting impression made upon the congregation was rarely favorable.

A further explanation for his unpopular preaching style is found in the fact that he had no training in public speaking. Dods later concluded that much of his trouble could have been minimized had he been given early training and experience. In his "Essay on Preaching" written sixteen years after going to Glasgow he deplored the fact that no practical preaching help was given to young Divinity students:

By dint of a curriculum whose chief fault is that it is too ambitious, and by the help of a staff of professors who would contrive to use the most opaque and unintelligent curriculum as a medium of light, we succeed in turning out a large proportion of educated theologians. But they are trained to be anything rather than public speakers. The training is only partly professional. Our licentiates are like graduates in medicine who have never seen a patient nor heard a clinical lecture; or like licentiates in law who have never sat at an office desk nor drawn up a deed. We produce athletes instead of skilled mechanics. Our young ministers are full of unavailable resources, and are as helpless in presence of a congregation as a historian in presence of an invading army. Hence our small proportion of success.¹

A fourth reason for his difficulty can be found in his failure to attach sufficient importance to preaching. As he himself said:

When I began preaching I greatly underrated its importance, and consequently had far too little ambition about it; and I see nothing more clearly than that I might have been helped to much more effective work could I have seen from the first what I now see of the very great importance of the function.²

1. Marcus Dods, Erasmus and Other Essays, p. 318.

2. Ibid., p. 345, Cf. Early Letters, pp. 244, 282.

His Reactions to Probation Difficulties.

Dods' diary and letters of the probation years reveal the anguish he experienced in trying to adjust himself to the task of preaching.

Whatever Paul says of the law in the 7th of Romans I have found true of the ministry; no doubt it is holy in itself, but in me it has revealed and excited an amount of sin that has slain me. Other people with stronger natures may have, doubtless have, endured a great deal more, but I could not have endured more misery than I have done since I began to preach.¹

His feelings on Sunday were expressed in a letter to Mary dated February 28, 1859, and in a diary entry of the sixth of April, 1860:

To waken on a Sunday morning and think the service of God a weariness, and wish I had been anything but what I am, and finding that this temper does not vanish with one rebuke, or two, this is most tormenting, and fills me with thoughts I need not describe.²

Today was such a day as I never pass a week without; a day when I felt utterly out of my element in my work.³

This enforced participation⁴ in a work for which he had no natural inclination produced within Dods a dislike for speech-making which remained with him most of his life. His later years of success as a preacher and lecturer altered his feelings so slightly that he could write to his son Harry in 1901:

I do pity you having to make speeches...But you will get hardened in time--though indeed I never have and hate it as much today as when I was your age.⁵

It should be noted that preaching was not the only unpleasant aspect of his new life as a licentiate. General pastoral work

1. Early Letters, p. 179.

2. Ibid., p. 134.

3. Ibid., p. 384.

4. Ibid., p. 385.

5. Later Letters, p. 63.

aroused similar discontent, in that it required an initiative for meeting people, an initiative which was foreign to his nature:

No day passes without strong temptation to give up this work -- this temptation appeals to me on the ground that I am not fitted for pastoral work; writing sermons is often the hardest labour to me, visiting is terrible. I often stand before a door unable to ring or knock -- sometimes I have gone away without entering. A lowness of spirit that it costs me a great deal to throw off is the consequence of this, and a real doubt whether it would not be better for myself and all whom it may concern that I should at once look for some work that I could overtake...It is rarely I can believe that I am doing anything in visiting a poor sick old woman, or in holding a prayer-meeting. I could more easily believe I was doing something were I teaching, or forging anchors, or building houses, or in any way keeping the social system a-going. This takes out of me all vigour for the work; I don't believe in it, and I don't succeed in it.¹

Since Dods was aware of his inadequacy in preaching and pastoral work, it is not surprising that during these probation years he was often weighed down with an oppressive sense of failure. To his mother he expressed his inner turmoil and frustration, "I am eaten up by an anxiety which had I foreseen I think I would have chosen some lighter profession."² To his sister he wrote:

...I have been in a terrible way since I came here. Dejection, depression, prostration, these words express it not, but I now know what it means to be sick at heart, body and mind together pained and mutually lacerating one another. A bitter past, a dumb, mute, blank present, and a blind, black future meeting at once are not good company for anyone...³

Dods displayed little confidence or hope about his future in the ministry. "I know," he wrote pessimistically, "that I cannot

1. Early Letters, p. 382.

2. Ibid., p. 110.

3. Ibid., p. 101.

now reasonably expect success in any line of life, because I don't deserve it and have done what I could to hinder it. Few fellows have made a messier start, a more palpable flounder than I."¹ His pessimism is further reflected in such statements as, "I have long known that I am past going to vacancies: if I do get anything it will be accidental."²

Even with intense feelings of failure and depression Dods could not bring himself completely to give up the idea of the ministry. Characteristic of the entire probation period was his indecisiveness, his wavering back and forth between the desire to quit the ministry altogether and a strong compulsion to continue in it.³ Even in a humorous vein he could write of his indecision, "Sometimes it seems as clear to me as noonday that I ought at once to give up (a much lower degree of persuasion would have been to Bunyan a voice from Heaven)."⁴ More seriously he wrote:

I'll never be a preacher unless some great change comes over me. I like the work now, but I have the same indecision as ever, the same doubt as to whether I might not do more good in another way, and so on. I hope in time these questionings will answer themselves.⁵

With such an aversion to the work of the pastorate, why did Dods continue to pursue the ministry? What enabled him to remain faithful in this pursuit? How could he carry on after being rejected by so many churches?

1. Ibid., p. 180

2. Ibid., p. 282.

3. Ibid., pp. 96, 114, 117, 174, 178. After five years as a probationer, he wrote: "I have, I think, lived too much...on the Providence principle -- merely escaping the trouble of deciding for myself..." p. 282.

4. Ibid., pp. 179-80.

5. Ibid., p. 122.

The Sustaining Forces.

Sense of duty. Dods had an extremely high regard for duty which, when combined with his faith in the goodness of God, produced stability of remarkable quality. He has not left his readers to guess about the importance which he attached to duty. In his article on "Malachi" which appeared in The Expositor of 1887 he gave an extended presentation of duty's ability to lead men through the most trying circumstances:

Better advice could not be given to skeptics of any age than to remind them of the permanent satisfaction and abiding reality of duty. The state of mind in which Malachi found his contemporaries is frequently produced in our own day. Conscious failure in life naturally tends to embitter a man. If he has any pride, it is galling in the extreme to find that all he has spent himself on has turned to dust and ashes in his hand. Many, in such circumstances, brand life as a cruel deception. Nothing, they tell you, can be made of it, there is no aim worth living for; all that professes to be so is either a lie or a mistake. It takes a pure and strong nature to stand the test of failure. Where there is not genuine humility, the results of failure are apt to be disastrous. Men are tested when summoned in providence to accept blame, to confess mistakes, to admit weakness. The secret of much of the cynicism, aimlessness, bad temper, and unhappiness of men is that the objects they have all their life aimed at turn out to be worthless or unattainable. But not to believe in life is not to believe in God. To gird at the present order of things, and sneer at success and earnestness, is to sneer at God. To lose hold of the faith that there is a purpose in life, and that it is worth living is to lose hold of faith in God.

But a man may doubt many things, he may doubt everything, yet if he retains faith in duty and in a Divine order, this grain of mustard seed will grow to a faith that gives shelter and a resting-place in all vagrant thoughts. Each man must begin with what is clear to himself. And he who honestly does what he feels sure is right will, by living up to his moral convictions, arrive at all the faith he needs....And if you find a man following the light that is in him, turning to it and cherishing it and using it; if he has truth and integrity in his own

soul, and esteems duty above all, then you can not fix a limit to that man's advance. For all truth and duty are one, and the narrow and obscure path he is on leads infallibly to God. If a man denies himself and sets duty as his guiding light, it will lead him on till it is absorbed in the eternal day.¹

This last paragraph, as well as much of the preceding one, could almost be regarded as an autobiographical commentary on his probation years. Dods felt that his duty was not just to be a minister, but to remain faithful to Christ under hardship and to apply himself diligently to the tasks in hand. Many times during these probation years his position was bombarded by the diverting thoughts of doubt, despair and discouragement, but his undaunted sense of duty would successfully lead him through.² When his son Marcus, upon leaving Cambridge University in 1899, was wrestling with similar problems and discouragements concerning his vocation, Dr. Dods shared with him his confidence in duty's power to lead men aright:

There is a regular law in life, a law of progress and of gradually attaining what you are best fit for. By doing well the first tasks set you, you inevitably take a step, purchase a degree higher.³

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1. Marcus Dods, "Malachi," The Expositor, 3rd Series, 6:428-9, 1887. Cf. Marcus Dods Sermons (MSS. in the New College Library, Edinburgh), "Duty, the Permanent Satisfaction," and also Dods, "Nehemiah," The Expositor, 3rd Series, 6:290-1, 1887.
 2. Early Letters, pp. 308, 298, 382, 102, 103, 122, 100.
 3. Later Letters, p. 30.

Faith in God's Goodness. In addition to a lofty concept of duty Dods had strong faith in the goodness of God.¹ One of the sermon texts he favored during his probation was Romans 8:28, "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose."² His diary reveals that he regarded many of his hardships as the chastening which he needed in order to become better equipped for a place of service. In an entry made during the trying Spring of 1860, he elaborated on the difficulties he faced and his reactions to them. He then off-set this with expressions of his faith and concluded his meditation with this summarizing sentence:

I am in an advantageous position for working for Him now, and will He who has put me in the outward circumstance leave me destitute of the inward grace?³

Strength derived through books. A third encouraging factor during these probation years was the sustaining strength Dods received through the books he read.⁴ In 1887 Dods was asked, along with several other prominent citizens of Great Britain (Prime Minister W.E. Gladstone, Robert Louis Stevenson and others), to comment on the books which had influenced him.

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1. Early Letters, p. 382. See also Marcus Dods, The First Epistle to the Corinthians (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1889), p. 84-5.
 2. Ibid., pp. 129-30.
 3. Ibid., p. 382. See also p. 160.
 4. Years later Dods wrote: "We must use the best books; we must put ourselves under influences which we know are good for us, whatever they are for others; we must conscientiously employ such means of grace as our circumstances permit." The First Epistle to the Corinthians, p. 85.

In complying with this request he indicated the type of literary company he had kept before and during his probation and he showed insight into how his reading had played a vital role in the shaping of his character. The deepest of all influences he, of course, attributed to the Bible, particularly to

the writings in which St. Paul disentangled a spiritual and universal religion from the wrappings in which Judaism and incipient Gnosticism would have confined and buried Christianity; the discourses and sayings of our Lord Himself, which flashed endless light through the darkness which had hung around the unseen Father; the greatest bequest of the old world, the histories and prophecies and psalms which build up a background congenial to the Christian Faith.¹

Moreover, he acknowledged his debt to Shakespeare, Scott, Horace, Thackeray, Homer, Aristophanes and Augustine. But of the books which "nourished what was special" to him he mentioned four authors, Henry Martyn, John Foster, Robert Browning, and F.W. Faber, the first three of whom he read prior to or during his probation. His own words disclose the effect which his reading had on his development during his early years:

First...I would name the "Life of Henry Martyn,"² for in it I learned the reality of consecration and the strength and ceaseless growth in holiness which result from it. Here again, of course, it is the personality presented in the book which imparts influence. But to have a book which enshrines and imparts this influence is a benefit of incalculable value. Others may have derived the same ideas, convictions, and impulses from

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1. W.E. Gladstone and others, Books Which Have Influenced Me (London: British Weekly Extras, 1887), pp. 104-5.
 2. This book was first read in Newcastle, Nov. 1858, during his first year of probation. See Early Letters, pp. 102, 114.

other sources, but to Henry Martyn I owe an element in belief, in character and in life which, perhaps, is too individual to be publicly analysed.

More freely can I speak of John Foster, to whom I was introduced by the fitting man at the fitting time.¹ Before I had made a study of any writer, ancient or modern, and while as yet Fenimore Cooper was almost my sole non-compulsory reading, one of the most efficient teachers and worst-used men I have known took me in hand and...counselled me to read each week one chapter of Foster's "Essays"...As an introduction to Foster, no words of mine can explain the influence it had upon my mental attitude and habits of thought. Analytic and critical, Foster is also imaginative and speculative... Foster possesses the opening mind with the belief that severe thinking on the motives of men, the varying situations of human life, the influences which moved character, and the principles which ought to govern men, will always attain results of value and of interest. In his writings we see such results, and the process by which they are reached....There is in Foster an intense thirst for knowledge, an affinity for what is spiritual, a keenness of observation, a closeness of reasoning, and a living vigour which give depth and felicity to his style and make his writing continuously trenchant and suggestive.²

Influence of family. Although Dods' inner resources were primarily responsible for his remaining faithful to his calling during the trying probation era, the combined influence of his sister Marcia and brother Thomas also encouraged him to continue his pursuit of the ministry. An incident which took place during the summer of 1860 demonstrated the high regard he had for their opinions. In June of that year Dods saw an

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1. Mr. John Millar, Classical tutor at New College suggested the reading of Foster in May, 1850. Dods, then 16 years of age, was preparing to enter the University. See Early Letters, p. 28.
 2. Ibid., pp. 106-9. Alexander Whyte years afterwards recalled that "in those early days Foster's Essays and his Lectures were always lying open on my friend's desk. And he was always importuning me about Foster, to my lasting advantage." Whyte, op. cit., p. 49.

advertisement for a teacher of English literature and classics in the college department of the Glasgow Free Church Normal School. He immediately wrote to Marcia and Thomas, asking for their comments on the advisability of his applying for the post. As a point in favor of his applying, he mentioned that these were the subjects in which he was already proficient. Three days later he had the answers from his sister and brother in which they opposed the idea of his leaving the ministry. In his expression of thanks to Marcia he said:

I am very grateful for your letter; it and one from Tom much to the same purpose have decided me not to apply, though I am not by any means finally convinced either by what you or he says that I am any better fit for, or as well fit for preaching as teaching.

P.S. Without this advice of yours and Tom's, I would certainly have applied for that situation.¹

Having considered in the preceding pages some of the general aspects of Dods' probation, attention will now be directed toward a chronological survey of his activities during these six years.

Work in Newcastle.

On the seventh of September, 1858, Dods was licensed to preach by the Free Church Presbytery of Edinburgh. Two months later he received and accepted an invitation to become a temporary assistant to the Rev. P.L. Miller, minister of the John Knox Free Church, Newcastle. As assistant he was primarily responsible for the Wednesday night

1. Early Letters, pp. 179-81.

prayer service, a special Wednesday night class composed of over twenty young men, the Sunday evening service, and a portion of the pastoral visiting. Mr. Miller's poor health also made it necessary for Dods frequently to take the Sunday morning service as well.

His new role as assistant weighed heavily upon him at first, causing him no small amount of anxiety.¹ After only two or three weeks in Newcastle he experienced such a painful sense of unfitness that he told Marcia he knew "what it means to be sick at heart."² However, as the weeks went by he began to observe some measure of success in his work which gave him grounds for optimism. His mid-week class was well received. There was a gradual increase in attendance at his newly organized Sunday class for young men.³ The church congregation gained in numbers considerably after Dods began to assist. Even his visiting, which began at approximately 2:00 p.m. each day and often continued until 10:00 p.m. in the evenings, offered some enjoyment periodically as it opened for him a new avenue for learning the needs of those to whom he was seeking to minister.⁴ From among the young men of his classes, he slowly acquired a few friends who succeeded in making him feel at home in Newcastle,⁵ and by his fourth month he was conscious of being well liked by some of the members of the congregation.

1. Ibid., pp. 100-1.

2. Ibid., p. 101.

3. Ibid., p. 126.

4. Ibid., pp. 120, 126.

5. Ibid., pp. 113, 124, 122.

This was noticeable especially in their action of March, 1859, in which they invited him to stay in Newcastle an additional five months.¹ The Rev. Mr. Miller was warm, kind, and disposed to be helpful to Dods in every way.²

Dods' abilities also were known and appreciated by those outside the congregation. Had he been willing to consider it, he could have received a call from the best-known Baptist Church in Newcastle following the resignation of their minister.³ During his fifth month in Newcastle he was offered a position as superintendent of the town mission which had eight missionaries under its direction.⁴ Dods felt he was too young for the post as all eight men were older than he.

Free High Church, Edinburgh.

In April of 1859 Dods received an invitation from the Rev. Robert Rainy to be missionary of the Free High Church, Dods' home church in Edinburgh. This invitation was not an easy one for Dods to accept. He had grown fond of the people in Newcastle and did not want to leave them so soon.⁵ Secondly, the work to which he was being invited involved visiting the closes of Edinburgh's High Street of which Dods had had some previous experience, not altogether pleasant. Awful reminiscences of the smells of the closes and the filthy odour of dirty human flesh came to him causing some

1. Ibid., pp. 130, 135.

2. Ibid., p. 146.

3. Ibid., pp. 133, 144.

4. Ibid., p. 146.

5. Ibid., pp. 147, 145, 109, 117, 126.

reluctance to engage in such work.¹ However, he finally accepted Dr. Rainy's offer and arranged to begin his new work in Edinburgh in the first week of July.

Upon arriving in Edinburgh Dods discovered that visitation in the slum areas near the Free High Church was as unattractive as ever:

I went towards the High Street on Wednesday, but turned away when I got near it, my head being like clay,² my heart like gall, and my blood like boiling verjuice.²

Yet, the work at the Free High Church had its rewards in providing for him an association with Dr. Rainy whom he greatly admired, and a renewed contact with some of the professors of New College. Especially gratifying was the affection shown to him by Professor George Smeaton.³

On December 4, 1859, Dods' mother died. The close relationship which the children had established among themselves during earlier years proved to be a source of much comfort and strength as they accepted the loss of their mother.

Lady Glenorchy's Free Church, Edinburgh.

Dods remained at the Free High Church only eight months. In March, 1960, he became an assistant to the minister of Lady Glenorchy's Free Church, Edinburgh, the Rev. G.R. Davidson, who was in declining health. Mr. Davidson looked to Dods for only one or two sermons each month. His regular weekly duties included a prayer

1. Ibid., p. 147.

2. Ibid., pp. 152-3.

3. Ibid., p. 154.

meeting address and a Sunday night lesson to a young women's class.¹ There was also the visiting which was no less burdensome to him than his similar work with the Free High Church.² Thus, his weekly schedule at Lady Glenorchy's Church provided more leisure than he had previously enjoyed either at the Free High Church or at Newcastle.³ He resolved to put this spare time to good use, which he did by increasing his reading and writing.⁴ It was at this time that he first had a desire to write a new translation of some of the works of Augustine, having derived much personal benefit from reading Augustine in the original.⁵ Also, he began a weekly series on the Parables for his young ladies class at Lady Glenorchy's.⁶

During this time of residence in Edinburgh he began to receive invitations from various churches to preach before their congregations as a candidate. Mr. Davidson was happy to co-operate in granting Dods permission to preach in other churches as often as he liked, even if he were not invited to do so as a candidate.⁷ His visits to these various congregations were not always encouraging as they did not result in a call, but they did provide an additional source of income which enabled him to buy certain books which he could not have afforded otherwise.⁸

1. Ibid., p. 159.

2. Ibid., p. 198.

3. Ibid., p. 159.

4. Ibid., p. 159.

5. Ibid., p. 176. In less than two years this desire was fulfilled. His translation of Augustine's Manual of Devotion appeared in the early part of 1862.

6. Ibid., p. 384.

7. Ibid., p. 158.

8. Ibid., p. 159.

In the absence of his sister, Marcia, who was working in Leeds, Dods found much happiness in his friendship with A. Taylor Innes, a promising young advocate; R.J. Sandeman, a ministerial contemporary; and J.C. Stewart, a banker whom he met while employed at the National Bank of Scotland.¹ When the weather was agreeable, they often would go rowing together at Barnton. So stimulating did Dods find this sport that he would occasionally go alone even on dangerously windy days.²

A new type of social experience which was most enjoyable to them all was an occasional impromptu trip to the coastal resort of North Berwick. Rarely had such outings been so appealing to Dods in the past, but these, he humorously reasoned, were different, in that they provided a quality of relaxation that made him better prepared for the coming week's work;

I am in considerable force, and have been writing with an energy that rarely visits me...Don't think I am by any means a slave, for I've evolved a theory, which is that I can do as much in four working days and two holidays as I can do in six working days, and in accordance with this theory I have been at North Berwick twice since I wrote; and so entirely just do I find my theory, that I almost believe I might halve the week, or as holidays are so helpful, possibly six days' play would be a better preparation for Sunday than six days' work.³

His enthusiasm for these trips was best demonstrated by his willingness to rise at 3:55 a.m. one Tuesday morning and

1. Ibid., pp. 169, 175, 193.

2. Ibid., pp. 188, 192, 207. Dods' graphic description of the tempestuous scene in Matthew 8:23-27, displayed his first-hand knowledge of rough waters. Cf. Marcus Dods' Sermons (MSS. in the New College Library, Edinburgh), "Stills the Tempest and the Demoniac," p. 1.

3. Ibid., p. 189.

walk thirteen miles to Longniddry before catching the train to North Berwick, thereby "saving expense in railway fare if not in shoe leather."¹

When the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland held its annual May meeting in Edinburgh in 1860, Dods, though preferring to continue his practice of avoiding it, felt compelled to visit some of its sessions. His expressed reactions are noteworthy in that they set forth an attitude to church courts which changed very little during the succeeding years:

The Assembly has put me into a wicked frame; I'll never be a Churchman, it would kill me; I hope dinner (that's my time for Carlyle, you know) may refresh me. If I had been without pride I could have been more comfortable; the second birth comes to be a most serious practical affair. If people would listen to sermons with a dash of bitterness in them, I would give some vigorous ones just now, but rather, I suppose, I should preach one to myself on bitterness.²

First Published Works.

The attention of several publishers turned towards Dods as it became known that this scholarly young licentiate had time available for writing. The first request came in the summer of 1860 from the periodical Good Words.³ Then, he was asked by the editor of The North British Review to write an article for the autumn issue.⁴ Soon there came a request from the editor of The British and

1. Ibid., p. 190.

2. Ibid., p. 172. Cf. pp. 292, 293, 294, 365.

3. Ibid., p. 384. Almost all the articles in the 1860 volume were unsigned, making it difficult to know the exact title and the nature of his contribution. Cf. Good Words, Vol. 1860.

4. Ibid., p. 181. This article as well as many others, was unsigned. Cf. The North British Review, Vol. XXXIII Aug.-Nov. 1860; Vol. XXXIV Nov. 1860-May 1861.

Foreign Evangelical Review for permission to print an article on "The Christian Element in Plato" which Dods had written.¹ Next, he was approached by the editor of The Witness for an article on Ackermann.² By the summer of 1861, Dods had firmly established himself as a competent writer and reviewer. As a result, he had a steady stream of requests from editors to review new books, plus an increasing number of invitations to write articles for periodicals.³ At last, his extraordinary ability to read, evaluate, and assimilate the writings of others had been recognized and utilized in such a way that his talents could be shared with an ever widening audience.

Dods found this to be a very satisfying work and one which he was to continue for a life-time. Since it was the relaxed schedule at Lady Glenorchy's Church which provided the leisure for his new found work with periodicals, he developed a new appreciation for his position as assistant to Mr. Davidson:

I greatly rejoice in our present establishment, and fear often "we shall never see the like again" -- not much responsibility, but as much work of a kind as I choose -- time at my own disposal, and an adequate comfort in my fellow-personages.⁴

When Marcia returned to Edinburgh in the early months of

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1. Ibid., pp. 194-5. This unsigned article was entitled "The Christian Element in Plato -- Ackermann and Whewell." The British and Foreign Evangelical Review, X, (April 1861), 396-407.
 2. Early Letters, p. 197.
 3. Ibid., pp. 196, 199, 201, 204, 209.
 4. Ibid., p. 204.

1861, life in Scotland's capital city continued to offer young Dods a succession of delightful experiences, marred only by the fact that none of the eight churches which he visited as a probationer prior to August, 1861, had called him to be their minister.¹ Yet Dods was not without a call altogether. In January of that same year, he received an invitation to be a colleague to the Rev. Dr. Mackay of Sydney, Australia.² While the climate, work, and position in Sydney were attractive to Dods, he refused the offer because he was not prepared to sacrifice his hopes of being established in Scotland.³

During the autumn of 1861, when the Rev. Mr. Davidson became too ill to continue his work, Dods assumed a greater portion of the responsibility at Lady Glenorchy's Church.⁴ For his consecutive sermons at the Sunday services, he preached a series on the Lord's Prayer. In preparation for this series he read the following authors: Witsen, Tholuck, Calvin, Trench, Augustine, Origen, Gregory Nyssa, Maurice, Stier, Cyprian, Tertullian, Olshausen, and Neander.⁵ He did such commendable work in the writing of these sermons that several months later his friends urged him to accept John Maclaren's offer to publish them under the title The Prayer That Teaches To Pray.⁶ He

1. Ibid., p. 205.

2. Ibid., p. 200.

3. Ibid., pp. 297, 300.

4. Ibid., p. 209.

5. Ibid., p. 385.

6. Ibid., p. 239, Marcus Dods, The Prayer That Teaches To Pray (Edinburgh: Maclaren & Macniven, 1863).

consented to this request, spent a fortnight in revising the material, and saw the first printed copy in bookshops in January, 1863, three months before his twenty-ninth birthday.¹ It was well received and continued to mount in popularity in the years that followed.² A typical review of this book was given in the English Presbyterian Messenger:

It is the work of a mature, cultivated, vigorous, independent mind, with much profound and suggestive thought, clothed in a clear, nervous, and elegant style, swelling at times into eloquence, and very admirable as a full and comprehensive exposition of "the prayer that teaches to pray."³

Further evidence of his competence as a student and as a writer of sermons was revealed in his next series during the Autumn of 1861. This series he selected from the Book of Revelation and entitled "The Epistles of Our Lord to the Seven Churches."⁴ Though these sermons were not published until 1867, they, too, reflected a thoroughness and depth of scholarship rarely demonstrated among those still in a probationary period.

The diverse literary activity of Dods was not limited to sermons, reviews, and articles for periodicals. To these was added work of translation. In the autumn of 1861 at the age of twenty-seven, he began work on his first published book, Manual of Devotion, which was a translation from Saint Augustine. This small book, published by John Maclaren of Edinburgh, and Hamilton, Adams and Co. of London, first appeared in January,

1. Early Letters, pp. 241, 352.

2. The book went into ten editions, the last one in 1900.

3. Press cutting in the collection of Dods' family papers.

4. Early Letters, p. 385; Marcus Dods, The Epistles of our Lord to the Seven Churches of Asia (Edinburgh: John Maclaren, 1867).

1862, and enjoyed a wide circulation requiring several editions. The first edition did not bear the name of the translator, but later editions did.¹ The excellence of this translation opened many new doors for further publication. The British and Foreign Evangelical Review asked him to do a series of translations of the most interesting minor patristic remains, a work which he found to be most pleasant.²

Return to John Knox Free Church, Newcastle.

This translation of the minor patristics, as well as several of his other literary efforts, was interrupted when Dods suddenly returned to Newcastle in June, 1862, to supply the pulpit of John Knox Free Church during the illness of its minister, the Rev. P.L. Miller. Few changes had taken place in the three years since he had previously served this friendly congregation. He resumed his role as "guide, philosopher, and friend to half the people in the congregation, and best beloved of every old wife in the neighbourhood."³ He was especially delighted to be again in close association with his eccentric Newcastle friend Peter Mouat, whom he found to be most sympathetic and stimulating.⁴

His six months in Newcastle were primarily limited to the writing of sermons, visits among the members of the congregations

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1. The second edition was published by Inglis and Jack of Edinburgh. A new edition was later published by John Maclaren and Son of Edinburgh, and Griffith and Farran of London.
 2. Early Letters, p. 209.
 3. Ibid., p. 297.
 4. Ibid., pp. 225, 267, 291, 367.

and occasional talks with Peter Mouat. Once a week Dods treated himself to an inexpensive outing alone, which included a money-saving visit to the railway station where he could exchange the monotonous four walls of his own reading room for the railway's attractive first class waiting-room.

For want of company, you must understand, I ask myself to dinner once a week at some place, often at a very comfortable eating-house that I've discovered, and for want of a drawing-room of my own I frequent the first-class waiting-room at the railway, where there is always a glorious fire, and a grand sofa, and every means for enjoying a wait, if you can. So I am much a gainer at the public expense.¹

While he was in Newcastle he received interesting news about two of his friends. First, he learned that A. Taylor Innes was going to Glasgow to accept an attractive offer with the law firm of Couper and Mackenzie.² Then, he heard that his friend and colleague, R.J. Sandeman, had received a call to a small church after sharing four years of probation with Dods.³ The appeals from his friends to publish his sermons on the Lord's Prayer reached their most influential point while he was involved in his work at John Knox Church.

The rejection he had from the three churches visited during his stay in Newcastle was somewhat offset by the news, reaching him in September, that the Rev. Robert Rainy had said, upon taking his new post as a Professor of Church History at New College, that Marcus Dods was the man who should succeed him as minister of the Free High Church, Edinburgh.⁴ Undoubtedly

1. Ibid., p. 223.

2. Ibid., p. 224.

3. Ibid., p. 230.

4. Ibid., p. 234.

many others agreed that Dods was capable of admirably serving this noted congregation. As further indication of the confidence men throughout the Assembly had in Dods, it can be noted that he was later invited to preach as a candidate at two outstanding Free Churches, Greyfriars, Edinburgh, and Trinity, Aberdeen.¹

Return to Edinburgh.

In December, 1862, Dods received an invitation to return to Edinburgh as supply of the Free High Church. The thought of preaching weekly to some of the professors who had taught him was not a comforting one to Dods and he felt very hesitant about accepting the offer. Yet, believing that he would be much more likely to get work of a permanent kind in Edinburgh than in Newcastle, he agreed to become supply minister of the Free High Church.²

Unlike his work in Newcastle, his service at the Free High Church involved only the preaching of two sermons weekly. He was not expected to do the visiting or any of the other pastoral responsibilities. To occupy his leisure time during the week he engaged in much diverse reading.³ He also attended many of Rainy's classes at New College.⁴ His admiration for Rainy as a teacher knew no bounds. He could unhesitatingly say, "He is a wonderful man!"⁵ "I admire Rainy in every capacity."⁶ Rainy was very kind to Dods, often coming to the

1. Ibid., p. 387.

2. Ibid., p. 248.

3. Ibid., p. 386.

4. Ibid., pp. 251, 253, 254, 256.

5. Ibid., p. 254.

6. Ibid., p. 260.

vestry after Dods preached in order to speak some word of appreciation or encouragement.¹ Rainy was one of the few who ever said Dods' pulpit manner was improving.²

Shortly after arriving in Edinburgh, Dods experienced his greatest disappointment with regard to the rejection of his candidature. Rarely was he cast down when told that another candidate had been selected in preference to him, but his rejection by the Roxburgh Place Free Church in Edinburgh in January, 1863, came as a severe blow. This was due to a number of circumstances all of which made it appear that he had every chance of being called. At their request he had preached to the Roxburgh Place congregation twice, his new book, The Prayer That Teaches To Pray, had just been lauded in the papers, the Lady Glenorchy Church people who knew him came in force to hear him at Roxburgh Place, and he had just been honored with the invitation to supply at the Free High Church. Having been defeated at such a propitious time in the city where he was best known and most appreciated was a discouraging experience indeed:

To be told so repeatedly that you are not fit for the work does go to a personal belief in the fact. And to be thrown back so often from particular spheres of the work, does tend very strongly to throw me off the work altogether. It is very difficult to keep in quite a good humour with the world, when a score of times in succession it tells you that you have mistaken your place in it. One cannot just begin again as freshly as before.³

1. Ibid., pp. 251, 262.

2. Ibid., p. 259.

3. Ibid., p. 255.

Yet, he did not dwell on his defeat. In fact, the very next sermon he prepared was on the text: "Rejoice in the Lord always, and again I say, Rejoice."¹ His preparation for this subject proved to be one of the most rewarding studies of his entire eight months at the Free High Church.²

It is also significant to note that in spite of such discouragements, he would not consider abandoning his pursuit of the parish ministry, even when the opportunity presented itself. Less than three weeks after receiving the news of his rejection by the Roxburgh Place Church, he was offered the sub-editorship of The Friend of India at a salary of £400 plus board and lodging. Dods quickly declined this attractive offer which would have placed him in an enjoyable work at a salary greater than that received by Dr. Rainy, who had just received his honorary doctorate from Glasgow University.³

As might have been expected, it was not long before various editors were again approaching Dods to write articles and reviews for them. The first to present him with such a request was the editor of The Daily Review for whom he did several notices in the ensuing months.⁴ However, there was not an abundance of offers as before with the consequence that only a small portion of his time was required to handle the

1. Ibid., p. 257.

2. Ibid., p. 260. See also Marcus Dods Sermons (MSS. in the New College Library, Edinburgh), Phil. 4:4 "Rejoice Always."

3. Ibid., p. 261.

4. Ibid., pp. 262, 291.

material being done for periodicals. In an effort to increase his literary endeavors he eventually approached Maclaren's publishing firm with an offer to write an introduction to the books of the New Testament for the use of laymen. Maclaren accepted the offer and gave him one year to complete it.¹

The most monumental work he did while a probationer in Edinburgh was his editing of J.P. Lange's six volume Leben Jesu² which was being translated from the German by various hands. Messrs. T. and T. Clark were the publishers in Edinburgh.³ Dods' appointment as editor showed the confidence which the publishers had in Dods' ability as a New Testament Scholar, for Clark knew that Dods was deficient in German, having asked him on previous occasions to translate German publications. Dods had always refused, explaining that he "had never been in Germany nor had learnt it with a teacher."⁴ But Clark wanted an editor who could give uniformity to the whole and add notes which would bring the book up to date. He was confident Dods could do this acceptably and urged him to try it. This he agreed to do in October, 1853, at the age of twenty-nine.

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1. Ibid., pp. 316, 327. This did not materialize because when Dods received his call to Renfield Church seven months later, he felt that he could not devote to it the time required for writing.
 2. Ibid., p. 326.
 3. Marcus Dods (ed.), The Life of the Lord Jesus Christ translated from the German of J.P. Lange. 6 vols. (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1864). (American edition; Philadelphia: Smith, English, and Co., 1872, 4 vols.).
 4. Early Letters, p. 181.

In the absence of Marcia, Taylor Innes, and R.J. Sandeman, Dods found Edinburgh far more lonely than he had anticipated.¹ However, new friends, mostly students, were soon made. Simeon Macphail, the younger brother of the Rev. John Macphail who had boarded with Mrs. Dods, was well liked by Dods.² Alexander Whyte was another student of Dods' acquaintance during this period. As he and Dods began to see more and more of each other there developed a strong friendship which was to last until Dods' death forty-six years later.³ The various comments which Dods wrote to his friends reflect his early impressions of Whyte:

A fine, honest, doctrinal, outspoken, hearty fellow, that knows what he is himself, and does not require others to be much better, though he thinks they are.⁴

I like him for his honesty, his intelligence, his goodness, and his real happiness of spirit.⁵

Whyte is a very high Calvinist, and a lover of the Puritans, and would talk doctrine for a year on end.⁶

St. Andrew's Free Church, Edinburgh.

When a vacancy at the Free High Church was filled in October, 1863, Dods was immediately asked by the Rev. Dr. John Bruce of

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1. Ibid., pp. 260, 262, 291, 331, 355, 362, 366.
 2. Ibid., pp. 251, 264, 277.
 3. Ibid., pp. 281, 287, 289.
 4. Ibid., p. 286.
 5. Ibid., p. 288.
 6. Ibid., p. 289.



St. Andrew's Free Church, Edinburgh, to stand by him till his health was improved.¹ This Dods did for eight months. His services were so appreciated by the St. Andrew's congregation that they presented him with a generous gift of £55 before he left Edinburgh.²

Rarely was he able to prepare new sermons for the St. Andrew's congregation because his work as editor of Lange's Life of the Lord Jesus Christ made heavy demands on his time. Eager to have the translation ready for early publication, Clark urged Dods to rush his editing as much as possible. Dods succeeded in meeting all of the publisher's deadlines and the first three volumes appeared in March, 1864, just five months after the first manuscripts were presented to him.³ The final three volumes were completed by the middle of April.⁴ Many of the reviews given in periodicals were very favorable in their comments about Dods' share in the work.⁵

Call to Renfield Free Church, Glasgow.

After agreeing to preach for Dr. Bruce, Dods received in October a second invitation from the Renfield Free Church, Glasgow, to preach as a candidate.⁶ As before, previous commitments made it necessary for Dods to decline the invitation,⁷ and it was not until the

1. Ibid., p. 331.

2. Ibid., p. 366.

3. Ibid., p. 359.

4. Ibid., p. 362.

5. Ibid., p. 362.

6. The first invitation to preach was received in September. See Ibid., p. 324.

7. Ibid., p. 332.

twenty-sixth of March, 1864, that Dods finally preached in the Renfield Church.¹ His personal health was at a low point that Sunday, for he went to Glasgow with a bad cold, an inflamed eye, an upset stomach and a toothache.² Though he said it under the influence of much weariness, Dods made a true prophecy following his week-end in Glasgow, "I think this must and ought to be the last time I shall ever preach as a candidate."³ After hearing him again two weeks later, the members of the congregation expressed their desire to have Marcus Dods as their minister.⁴ This decision greatly pleased A. Taylor Innes, the one person most instrumental in bringing Dods to Glasgow.⁵ The final call was issued the ninth of June, with 240 of the 402 members signing the call.⁶ Thus, at the age of thirty, Marcus Dods saw his six years of probation come to a close when he was ordained and inducted as minister of the Renfield Church on August 4, 1864.⁷

In the opinion of Henry Drummond, "it has been a rebuke to the Church and a solace to many an unhappy 'probationer' since, that a man like Dr. Marcus Dods should have begged at the door of churches, throughout the length and breadth of Scotland, for six long years without finding a people to

1. Ibid., p. 359.

2. Ibid., p. 360.

3. Ibid., p. 359.

4. Ibid., p. 362.

5. Ibid., pp. 359, 324, 332.

6. Ibid., p. 367.

7. Ibid., p. 4.

discover his worth." On further reflection, he said:

When it is remembered that in the eyes of Presbyterian Christendom a chronic probationer is the meanest of created things; when it is understood that his worn bag with its two "dried" tongues is the jest even of the railway porters, that his successive failures are known to every beadle in the land, that as the Churchless years go by he becomes the shunned of sessions, the despised of Presbyteries, the despair of the Ecclesiastics, one is lost in admiration at the audacity and faith of Renfield Church, Glasgow, in taking to its large arms the disheartened residuum of three and twenty vacancies.¹

An Evaluation.

In evaluating the overall significance of the probation years, two dominant effects can be noted. First of all, Dods experienced during these years a deepening of his spiritual life which permeated his entire personality, revealing itself in his increasing strength of character. Secondly, the leisurely schedule of his probation provided an opportunity for accelerated progress in scholastic attainments, especially of a literary nature, which could not have been achieved had he received a much earlier call to a church.

Even Dods himself could look back upon the trials of his early years with much gratitude as he became more conscious of the beneficial effect it had upon his spiritual life. In his article for the American Magazine of Christian Literature on "The Trials of Youth," in which he dealt with the passage, "It is good for a man that he bear the yoke in his youth," Dods first made clear that to bear the yoke is to be in subjection; to be compelled to walk in certain lines at the will

1. Henry Drummond, "Prof. Marcus Dods," The Expositor, 3rd Series, 10:67-8, 1889.

of another, to be prevented from choosing for ourselves and being our own masters. Then he added with a note of strong personal conviction, that the habits of industry, the love of work, the delight in mastering difficulties, the abilities to put pressure on himself, and the independence of character which a lad acquires in bearing the yoke, "pass into his nature as its permanent and most valuable ingredients." In conclusion, he gave this sanguine advice: "Do not, then, quarrel with your circumstances. You may quite legitimately wish to change them, but hold firmly to the belief that there is no condition in life in which you may not fulfil God's will and do what needs to be done."¹

It is interesting to observe his own conscious struggle in learning to bear the yoke. To Marcia he often explained what a fearful thing it was to be at once set down before the vast work to be done for God, and at the same time have his heart and all his affections continually asserting themselves, refusing to let go their objects. He regarded the school of self-denial as the hardest course of his career, involving "a heart-rending lesson, a long and bitter lesson," one he would gladly exchange for fasting or scourging. Few men have been more aware of the full price of self-denial, and what it involves, than Dods when he wrote:

But this is the hard thing to learn, that in everything, from this moment for ever, I am not only not to get my own will, but I am to desire not to get

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1. Marcus Dods, "The Trials of Youth," Magazine of Christian Literature, (New York) 3:248, January, 1891. See also the manuscript sermons of probation period, especially that on James 1:18, regarding the necessity of trial, and that on Luke 9:23 which treats the subject of suffering.

my own will, to will to be controlled by another wholly and unceasingly. This has to me at times all the pain of dissolution. It is indeed a dying to this world.¹

Dods was no less conscious of the scholastic advantages he had during his enforced period of waiting. "Of course," he wrote in a letter to the Rev. J.C. Macphail, "I am getting a great lot of study that I could never have hoped to accomplish in a charge."² Nevertheless, he did not always appreciate this advantage. Six years is a long time. When coupled to the eight years of study at the University it appears to be an abnormally long period of preparation. Yet, when one sees the fruits of the remaining forty-five years of his life, the probation comes into a different perspective. If the architect who is designing a towering structure is careful to provide an adequate foundation, it should not be surprising that the Architect of Life should do the same when designing a ministry that is intended to reach great heights. There can be little doubt that the additional knowledge and ability acquired during the years 1858 to 1864 played a major part in Marcus Dods' ability to reach an ever-increasing position of influence in the field of Biblical scholarship.

Six years of probation brought to Marcus Dods disappointments, problems, discouragements, and difficulties of a type which rarely confront the average minister. Yet it is now

1. Early Letters, pp. 102-3. Cf. p. 382.

2. Ibid., p. 196.

evident that these same years produced a man of extraordinary stature. Having diligently applied himself to each task which confronted him as a licentiate, and having tenaciously held to the conviction that God wanted him in the ministry, even when circumstances seemed to the contrary, Marcus Dods came forth from his prolonged probation as one of the humblest, most dedicated, most learned young ministers of the Church in Scotland.¹ His life during each succeeding year gave evidence of the truth of his words, spoken to the students of the Free Church College, Glasgow, in 1880:

You may be perfectly sure that if you prepare yourself for a place of influence in the Church, the place will one day be given you.²

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1. Patrick Carnegie Simpson, "Dr. Marcus Dods: A Record and an Appreciation," The British Monthly, 4:184, March, 1904.
 2. Marcus Dods, Erasmus and Other Essays, p. 348. Cf. also Lecture MS. "Address to Lancashire College, 18 Jan. 1896", p. 5.

CHAPTER TWO

HIS TEACHING MINISTRY AS A PREACHER

It is a remarkable fact, indeed, that the most unattractive talent of a probationer should become, under the sympathetic and appreciative attention of a congregation, one of the most distinguishing aspects of his ministry. Yet, that is what happened in the case of Marcus Dods. The Renfield congregation had an awareness that the unimpassioned reading of sermons was not to be despised if the reader and the sermons carried a vital message. To their delight and benefit they soon discovered in the life and sermons of their new minister a radiant spiritual power surpassing almost all others they had seen or heard. Dr. A.B. Bruce, Professor in the Free Church College, Glasgow, exalted the position of Marcus Dods to a very high level when he said, "To the members of his own congregation the minister of Renfield was first-rate in every sense. He was their ideal preacher and their idol, always worth listening to, and no one else worth hearing, by comparison."¹

How did Dods achieve such influence as a preacher? In what ways were his sermons different? How did he effectively overcome the handicap of his unpopular style of delivery? These are only a few of the questions which confront those who

1. A.B. Bruce, "The Rev. Marcus Dods, D.D.," Biblical World (Chicago), 7:246, April, 1896.

seek an explanation for the great prominence and success which came to a man who, for six years, was shunned by the churches he visited as a candidate.¹ An analysis of Dods' preaching, therefore, has been the aim of this chapter. The collection of Dods' manuscripts in the New College Library, Edinburgh, has provided primary source material for the preparation of this chapter, which for the sake of clarity has been divided into the following sections: general considerations of his preaching, its themes and content, and its influence and effectiveness.

I. GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS OF DODS' PREACHING

Attitude of Congregation.

At the outset, it should be noted that Dods made no attempt to change the style of his preaching after going to Glasgow. The change was in the attitude of those who heard him. As a probationer, Dods was often judged primarily on his delivery; that is, on how he was preaching. The people of Renfield Church, on the other hand, were led to give more attention to his message; that is, to what he was preaching. With their increasing knowledge of Dods, the Renfield congregation soon learned what to expect on Sundays. Instead of oratorical treats they knew they would hear the dispassionate

1. J.R. Fleming in his book A History of the Church in Scotland 1843-1874 (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1927) mentions Dods in the section on "Outstanding Men" (p. 168) and again in the section on "Preachers" (p. 257-8). In the companion volume A History of the Church in Scotland 1875-1929 (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1933) he speaks of Dods in the section on "Preaching" (p. 194) as one of the "conspicuous preachers mentioned in our previous volume" who "survived into this period."

reading of excellent sermons which were practical, relevant, profound, and true to the Scriptures. Above all, they learned to recognize in the preacher himself an exemplary life which gave evidence to the truth of all that was being spoken from the pulpit. Consequently, the members of Renfield ceased to regret the absence of animation in the pulpit as they began to realize what a privilege it was to hear regularly sermons of superior quality, preached by a man of such high moral stature. e/

This response did not come as a surprise to Dods. His understanding of human nature plus his confidence in the validity of his message¹ gave him a growing assurance that if he exercised patience, the congregation would eventually accept and appreciate his method of preaching. This was clearly expressed and substantiated by the statements he made in a published letter to a young minister whose preaching was assumed to be a failure.

Your failure...may lie at the door of your hearers. You are comparatively young, and have not been long in the ministry. It may be that you have not had time to educate your people to understand your teaching or to awake in them a consciousness of spiritual wants which your teaching is calculated to satisfy. If that is the case, I pray you to remain strictly faithful to your present method of preaching. You are unpopular because of your hearers' false expectations. Wait. Have the courage to be a failure. Abate not one jot of what you demand from your hearers. Do not sacrifice the future to the present. You have to "make" your people as well as your theology, but your theology first, and afterwards

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1. Repetition of the sermons preached during the early days of his probation may be cited as evidence of his confidence in the validity of his message. For example, he continued to preach a sermon on James 1:18 in several of the churches which he visited as a candidate. Being rejected as a candidate by these churches did not discourage him from preaching this same sermon a total of thirteen times over a period of six years. See Marcus Dods Sermons (MSS. in the New College Library, Edinburgh).

your people. And your people through your theology.

...You will bring your people gradually to appreciate and adopt your own point of view; and when you have conquered this initial difficulty, the rest will depend on yourself. One Sunday you will discover, to your own surprise and joy, that you and they understand one another. Then comes your opportunity.¹

The congregation's change in attitude towards Dods' preaching was rapidly effected. After a few months under him they no longer expected or wanted a pulpit demonstration in eloquence.² Instead, they desired and awaited a weekly lesson which edified, exhorted, or rebuked. Sunday after Sunday they returned "for the express purpose of being influenced" by what he had to say, "watching and waiting" for words "of instruction or edification."³ To this end, no one could assist them more capably than their new minister.

A Teacher Rather Than a Preacher.

A.B. Bruce rightly discerned that Dods "was a wise teacher rather than a preacher."⁴ Dods himself felt that the object of the pulpit was "not only to convince, but to instruct,"⁵ and to

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1. John Watson and others, The Clerical Life, A Series of Letters to Ministers (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1898), pp. 71, 73.
 2. Apparently each stranger who visited Renfield Free Church had to undergo this transition before learning fully to appreciate Dods' preaching. Drummond was one who, at first, did not care for the preaching at Renfield. But repeated visits effected the change in attitude and he eventually became one of Dods' most ardent admirers. See Henry Drummond, "Prof. Marcus Dods," The Expositor, 3rd Series, 10:65-76, 1889.
 3. Marcus Dods, On Preaching (Glasgow: James Maclehose, 1880), p. 19. See also Dods, MSS. Lectures, "Address to Lancashire College, 18 June, 1896," p. 3.
 4. A.B. Bruce, loc. cit.
 5. Marcus Dods, M.A. (ed.), Early Letters of Marcus Dods, D.D. 1850-1864 (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1910), p. 139.

this matter of instruction he gave much of his energy.

Few men could have been better prepared to fulfil the role of a teacher in the pulpit. Dods had a rich background both in knowledge and experience. This background, in fact, accounts for much of the success which he enjoyed as a minister of Renfield.

Dods had an early inclination for teaching which first revealed itself in his tutorial efforts while a student at the University of Edinburgh.¹ He found so much satisfaction and pleasure in teaching that he often considered the possibility of making it his life's vocation.² In actual fact, he never ceased to be a teacher. His sermons, letters, book reviews all bore evidence of his flair for pedagogy. It was only natural, then, that his preaching should have been primarily didactic.

As a pedagogue, Dods had never known anything but success. The students he taught prior to his ordination held him in such high esteem that some of them moved to Edinburgh in order to continue their schooling under his direction. Captain Fordyce, a parent, so admired Dods as a tutor that he took him to Paris with his family for several months.³ As a result of Dods' assistance, one of his students finished fourth out of a class of two hundred.⁴

1. Ibid., pp. 43, 44, 47. Cf. pp. 12-14 of this thesis.

2. Cf. pp. 13, 33 of this thesis.

3. Cf. p. 14 of this thesis.

4. Early Letters, p. 205.

This same type of success followed Dods into the ministry because he was no less a teacher there. At Renfield Church "he supplied didache of the first order rather than kerygma."¹ In substantiating this statement, A.B. Bruce related a conversation which took place between two clerical friends who together had been hearing a well-known pulpit orator. After leaving the church one said to the other, "Well, what did you think of that?" The reply was, "First-rate preaching, second-rate teaching. If Dr. Dods had been the preacher handling the same text, it would have been just the other way-- first-rate teaching, second-rate preaching."² As the members of his congregation learned to recognize and respect him as a teacher they could better understand why his pulpit methods were those of a lecturer rather than those of an orator. Thus, the more familiar the people of Renfield became with the didactic preaching of Dods, the more they accepted and even appreciated his unembellished style of delivery, for those who heard him regularly "discovered that here was one whose methods they could respect, whose moral and intellectual instrument could be relied upon, who founded truth upon the nature of things," who "satisfied in rational ways their intellectual needs, and fed their spiritual hunger with bread which really nourished them."³ It can be concluded, then, that much of Dods' success

1. A.B. Bruce, loc. cit.

2. Ibid.

3. Henry Drummond, "Prof. Marcus Dods, "The Expositor, 3rd Series, 10:68-9, 1889.

as a preacher sprang from his ability to teach and from the willingness of his congregation to accept him as a teacher.

Method of Sermon Preparation.

In his lecture on preaching at the Free Church College, Glasgow, in 1880, Dods explained the system he used in preparing his sermons. He said he kept "a register of suitable and unworn texts."¹ As he read the Bible a few words would sometimes leap out from the context and take possession of his mind as the final representation of some truth. Whenever that occurred, he followed the dictate of nature and marked a large "T" on the margin of his working Bible or transferred the words at once to a notebook kept for the purpose. He then added any ideas which the text seemed to present to him at the moment. He allotted two notebook pages to each suggestive text and added from time to time what his reading or observation contributed to the elucidation or amplification or illustration of the subject. In this way, he often found, to his great joy, a sermon almost ready-made.² He kept such a book for years and "found it one of the most tangible and appreciable helps to preaching."³ For example, he would record the text, Numbers 12:14 "The Lord said unto Moses, If her father had but spit in her face should she not be ashamed seven days?" This he would note as an ideal text

1. Marcus Dods, Erasmus and Other Essays (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1891), p. 325.

2. Ibid., pp. 325-6.

3. Ibid., p. 326.

for a sermon on the comparative shame one feels on receiving tokens of God's displeasure and expressions of men's displeasure.¹ Similarly he cited from the Old Testament Exodus 2:12, "He looked this way and that way, and when he saw that there was no man he slew the Egyptian," and recorded that it would be a good text from which to preach on "the influence which other men's judgment has on our conduct," or more generally on the motives of human conduct.²

In addition to his reading and noting Bible texts, Dods' own keen observations of life often supplied the ideas for some of his most effective sermons. "Sometimes," said he, "the best sermons you are capable of making are...not suggested by a text, but by some defect in religious life that meets you wherever you go among your people, or by some deep-cut experience in your own history." He understood why these were effective sermons.

There is always some similarly wounded soul that recognizes that you are touching the critical point in its experience, and that eagerly hails your explication of its difficulty.³

It did not disturb Dods when he could not easily find a text for these sermons. Occasionally he would finish writing them before he knew the texts he would attach "to satisfy the popular expectation."⁴ Regarding this problem, he comforted

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1. Marcus Dods Sermons (MSS. in the New College Library, Edinburgh), "Shame of a God's Displeasure."
 2. Marcus Dods, Erasmus and Other Essays, p. 327.
 3. Marcus Dods, On Preaching, p. 9.
 4. Dods' famous sermon on "What is a Christian" is a good example of this. His attackers made much of the fact that his sermon did not treat the text.

many inexperienced divinity students with these words:

Even for prominent points in Christian teaching, you will sometimes be at a loss to find the suitable motto -- and I do not know that it matters much, so long as your subject is clearly enounced and really runs on the lines of Christian teaching or Christian experience.¹

When writing a sermon Dods secured vividness by gathering his people before his mind's eye. In this way he more easily avoided the tendency to treat his subject abstractly or to treat it apart from the living necessities of his people. It also put into his sermons the liveliness of personal intercourse. "Never allow your sermons to be a monologue," he advised, "but make it an address from beginning to end."² His adherence to this suggestion helped to keep him from becoming dull, uninteresting, and abstract.

Realizing that good preaching "calls for true devotedness and sustained toil much more than for unusual natural gifts," Dods encouraged young ministers to spend at least six hours each day in hard work for the pulpit.³ He believed that these should be "stated hours of work as fixed as the hours of worship." This he regarded as a minimum. He himself did not limit his sermon preparatory work to the time he spent in his study. A summary of Dods' attitude towards

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1. Marcus Dods, Erasmus and Other Essays, p. 328. In later life Dods often preached sermons which had no text; e.g. "Pharisees and Sadducees," 1881; "Comparative Glory of the Law and Gospel," 1882; "Faith," 1887; "Christianity," 1885; "Who is the Christian and How?" 1889; "Hindrances and Inducements," 1890.
 2. Marcus Dods, On Preaching (Glasgow: James Maclehose, 1880), p. 14.
 3. Marcus Dods Lectures (MSS. in the New College Library, Edinburgh) "Address to Lancashire College, 18th June, 1896," p. 3-4.

sermon preparation was given in his challenge to ministerial students of Lancashire College -- a challenge which he himself had already accepted.

Be ambitious to excel as preachers and spare no pains...Your preaching must be the aim and end round which all your reading, observation and experience revolve. Bring everything to bear on that.

In a word, magnify your office, recognize it as rightfully claiming the whole strength you can command, the most skillfully trained intellect, and the utmost grace that pure and healthful living, constant prayer and hopeful self-control can bring to you. No work makes so constant a demand on all our best energies, and none therefore, yields so constant a return of keen and healthful happiness.¹

Sermon Form.

Dods did not begin writing his sermons until the plan was clearly in view -- until he knew what he wanted to enforce, where to begin, where to end, and until he knew the arguments he would use as well as the illustrations by which to enliven them. Thus, once his plan was vividly conceived, the heaviest part of his work was over.² The difficulty came when he would first try to formulate the plan, which he would attempt to do by jotting down various things that occurred to him as requiring to be said on the subject. "This is often terrible work," he admitted.³ Many times he would spend an entire morning at his desk without recording one usable idea. However, on other

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1. Ibid., p. 3,5. Cf. "Address to New College, Hampstead and United Colleges, Bradford, June, 1900," another manuscript lecture.
 2. Marcus Dods, On Preaching (Glasgow: James Maclehose, 1880), p. 15.
 3. Ibid.

occasions, he would quickly jot down enough to enable him to see how best to group his material effectively.¹

His aim, though not always realized,² was to break up his discourse into brief paragraphs, with each paragraph clearly enouncing and completing a single idea. "A sermon thus broken up," he reasoned, "is as much more effective than a continuous, prolonged dribble of ideas as a succession of blows of a hammer is more effective than a prolonged and continuous pressure."³ He also sought to vary the treatment of each paragraph. "If one is explanatory, let the next be hortatory; if one is dogmatic, let the next be illustrative or emotional."⁴

He placed much importance on the use of illustration, regarding it as one of the best means of imparting and infixing truth. Dods always tried to draw his illustrations from actual life rather than revert to hypothetical cases. This he did in the belief that direct affirmation of facts commands more attention.⁵ He did not quote others to any great extent. He preferred to illustrate by making references to situations, places and people, the conduct of others, the results of men's actions, or the similarities in history to current affairs. His illustrations tended to be of the type that appealed to all

1. Ibid.

2. Three-page paragraphs occasionally appeared in his printed sermons: e.g. Christ and Man, pp. 210-212; The Parables of Our Lord (first series), pp. 93-95, 95-97, 99-101; Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph, pp. 32-34.

3. Marcus Dods, Erasmus and Other Essays, p. 338.

4. Ibid., pp. 338-9.

5. Marcus Dods, Erasmus and Other Essays, pp. 334-5.

generations as the following example from one of his well-known sermons demonstrates:

Suppose you enter a studio where a sculptor is working, will he hand you his hammer and chisel to finish the most difficult piece of his work or to do any part of it? Assuredly not. It is his own idea that he is working out, and none but his own hand can work it out. So with us who are to be moulded by Christ.¹

Sermon Delivery.

Dods strongly advised Divinity students to cultivate the art of preaching without notes. As he told the students of New College, Edinburgh, when he addressed them on November 20, 1886, "No art is so much worth acquiring as that of public speaking."² His greatest regret as a minister was that he did not learn to preach without notes. "Of all technical faults of which I this day repent," he confessed, "there is none which I more constantly and deeply regret than that I did not thoroughly acquire this faculty."³ When Dods made this statement in 1880 he was, by most standards, a very successful preacher. He was well-known throughout Britain,⁴ he was preaching each Sunday to an audience larger than the membership of his church,⁵ he had received an honorary doctorate,

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1. Marcus Dods, How to Become Like Christ (London: James Clarke & Co., 1898), p. 18.
 2. News item in British Weekly, 1:12, November 26, 1886.
 3. Marcus Dods, On Preaching, p. 17.
 4. In circulation were 28 books which carried his name as author, editor, or translator. Also the charges brought against him in 1877-78 focused nation-wide attention on him.
 5. See chart on page 95 for attendance records taken from the Session Minute Books of Renfield Church.

and his six published books were being widely circulated, as were the twenty-two volumes which he had edited. Yet he "constantly and deeply" regretted his inability to preach without notes. Why did he say this so forcefully in the midst of his success? The answer was implied in a later remark, in which he said that a speech without notes will "tell on every one, and with tenfold more force than written discourse tells on the few."¹ As a dedicated teacher, Dods could not be satisfied to reach one when he could more efficiently be reaching ten; nor could he be satisfied to reach six hundred (the average attendance at Renfield)² when he could be reaching six thousand. His desire was to communicate truth as effectively as possible, and he felt that his habit of sermon-reading was an indisputable handicap to his potential effectiveness. Freed from this handicap, he believed that he could do his work with even greater success. "A read sermon...may be instructive and impressive," he acknowledged, "but undoubtedly the highest form of address is that which a man speaks face to face with his audience, without even the slightest intervention of his manuscript."³ Dods, therefore, desired this ability which would broaden and enrich his teaching ministry.

1. Marcus Dods, On Preaching, p. 18.

2. See chart on page 95 .

3. Marcus Dods, Erasmus and Other Essays, p. 341.

II. THE THEMES AND CONTENT OF DODS' PREACHING

Selection of Topics.

Dods was very sagacious in his selection of sermon topics, for he was aware that "success in preaching very much depends upon a judicious choice of subjects."¹ This, he found, was the most taxing phase of his preparation.

To myself it has always seemed to be the most difficult part of the whole work of preaching to discover themes which are at once capable of carrying some considerable weight of Christian truth and likely to interest people.²

Most of his sermons were on subjects which had a never-failing interest to all classes and kinds of men as well as on subjects which were closely connected with human character and human life. "Unless you speak to men of the actual circumstances and objects with which they have to do," he explained, "they at once perceive you are but vapouring, maundering unverifiable platitudes, and it does not concern them to listen."³

Dods did not find his sermon topics and material in books of sermons. At least, he did not directly get his material from such books. These published sermons he found helpful in a more indirect way. He always kept at hand for devotional reading a volume of sermons by someone like Newman, Temple, Beecher or Spurgeon. He deemed it a good way to begin the day for two reasons. The ideas he thus received became part of his own

1. Marcus Dods, Erasmus and Other Essays, p. 323.

2. Marcus Dods, On Preaching, p. 8.

3. Marcus Dods, Erasmus and Other Essays, p. 323.

mental processes and entered into his own spiritual life so that his mind was gradually filled with material for his own thought to work upon. Also, it kept him up to the right preaching level, and gave him the proper tone in which to begin his own work.¹ This reading of published sermons by the best preachers gave him the opportunity to study, analyse, and learn the secrets of the "sermons which had approved themselves most decidedly to the hearers."²

In his selection of preaching material Dods was most often guided by the needs of his own spiritual life. "You will always command attention," he observed, "when you speak of what is of vital moment to your own spiritual well-being."³ His adherence to the principle of preaching what he first had verified in his own experience was one of the secrets of his success in the pulpit. As he himself remarked:

There is no subject so trite and commonplace that will not acquire freshness when spoken of by one who is dealing with it as matter of life and death to himself. It is almost useless handling Justification, Sacrifice, the Divinity of Christ, His intercession, if you are merely wishing to fill up a Sunday-service with an adequate treatment of such a theme; but these are the subjects which tell most powerfully when you approach them, because you find that for your own soul's peace you are driven to take to pieces all that has been taught you about them, and to reconstruct them for yourselves.⁴

Dods regarded it as the duty of every settled minister to be sure that he was preaching with sufficient frequency on

1. Ibid., p. 331.

2. Ibid.

3. Marcus Dods, On Preaching, p. 10. Cf. Marcus Dods, The First Epistle to the Corinthians, pp. 204-5.

4. Ibid.

the central facts and truths of the Gospel. However, for the sake of vitality and relevance, he preferred to preach on what was of present interest to himself, and went so far as to say that, with certain limitations, "it may be laid down as a law that whatever was thoroughly interesting to one's self, and has a religious bearing was fit material for preaching."¹

The following topics were among those selected by Dods for the year 1875, a typical year:²

"Self-Examination	Psalm 139:23
"Ignorant Prayers"	Mark 10:38
"Spirituality of God's Kingdom"	Romans 14:17
"All Things Working for Good"	Romans 8:28
"Secret Sins"	Romans 2:16
"Perfectionism"	(no text given)
"Substitution"	I Peter 2:24
"Faith--Its Range, Limitations, and Increase."	Matthew 17:20-1 & Luke 17:5
"Gethsemane"	Matthew 26
"Choir of Christian Graces"	II Peter 1:5
"Creature and Creator"	Psalm 100:3
"God's Thoughts Not Ours"	Isaiah 55:8
"Sealing of the Spirit"	Ephesians 4:30

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1. News item in British Weekly, 1:12, November 26, 1886.
 2. All these sermons are unpublished manuscripts. Each MS. contains the dates when preached.

Dods was especially good in his character-studies. Professor A.B. Bruce was of the opinion that in his sermons on men and women in the Bible, Dods showed a "wise knowledge of life and masterly insight into the springs of action, and handled his subject always with a bold realism untainted by the slightest touch of vulgarity."¹ These sermons were much appreciated by the older members who had lived long in the world and seen much of men and their ways.²

The year 1875 contained many character-study sermons. Among them were the following:

"Elijah and Jezebel	(No text given)
"Naaman"	II Kings 5
"Jehu"	II Kings 9 & 10
"Joel"	(no text given)
"Amos"	(no text given)
"Philemon"	Philemon
"Jeremiah"	(no text given)
"Ezekiel"	(no text given)
"Daniel"	(no text given)
"Nebuchadnezzar"	Daniel 4

1. A.B. Bruce, op. cit., p. 246.

2. One elder of Renfield observed that not only was Dods good in his character-studies, but the worse the character the better the sermon. "Dods is at his best," he concluded, "when he is discussing one of those Old Testament blackguards." This incident was related by the elder to A.B. Bruce who quoted it in the article mentioned above.

Lecture Series.

In treating these character studies Dods favored the method of lecturing, that is, treating the subjects in series. This enabled him to touch upon delicate matters of personal and home life which otherwise he would never have had the audacity to select for treatment.¹ Lecturing also saved him from spending many hours weekly in the endeavor to find a suitable subject on which to preach. Lecturing was used extensively by Dods for subjects other than those dealing with character-study; in fact, it became one of the major features of his preaching.

During his ministry in Glasgow he lectured on the following subjects:²

"Exodus"	May, 1867 -- December, 1867
"Numbers"	January 1868 -- March, 1868
"The Life of Christ"	March 1868 -- March, 1870 (non-consecutive)
"Psalm 119" (four lectures)	August, 1868
"James"	December 1869 -- May 1870
"Psalm 119"	September 1870 -- October 1870 (repeat from 1868)
"Exodus and Numbers"	September 1873 -- May 1874 (repeat from 1867, 1868)
"I and II Samuel" (character study)	September 1874 -- November 1874
"I & II Kings"	December 1874 -- March 1875

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1. An outstanding example of the force with which he dealt with these problems was seen in his sermon on "Ezra" which was later published in The Expositor (third series 6:53). In that sermon he dealt with drunkenness, which he considered to be one of the most harmful vices of the nation. Cf. pp. 323-4 of Erasmus and Other Essays.
 2. Dates are obtained from sermons of the manuscript collection. Some of the sermons from a particular lecture series are not contained in the MS. collection but can be found in published sources.

"Prophets"	March 1875 -- December 1875
"Hebrews"	January 1876 -- June 1876
"The Life of Christ"	September 1876 -- May 1877 (repeat from 1868)
"Parables"	October 1877 -- March 1878
"I Thessalonians"	April 1879 -- May 1879
"The Teaching of Jesus"	November, 1880 -- April 1882
"Acts" (32 sermons)	October 1882 -- March 1884
"Job" (three lectures)	September 1882 -- October 1882
"The Teaching of Jesus"	November 1882 -- June 1884 (repeat from 1880, 1882)
"The Teaching of Jesus"	February 1887 -- December 1887 (repeat for third time)

To these might be added the titles of many of his published works. P. Carnegie Simpson, one of Dods' successors at Renfield Church and one who had the opportunity to talk with those who heard Dods, said that all of Dods' volumes of expositions of Scripture originally "were Renfield sermons."¹ The following books might be classed in this category:

1. P. Carnegie Simpson, The British Monthly, 4:186, March, 1904.

<u>The Epistles of Our Lord to the Seven Churches</u>	1867 (date of publication)
<u>Israel's Iron Age: Sketches from the Period of the Judges</u>	1874
<u>Isaac, Jacob, Joseph</u>	1880
<u>The Parables of Our Lord (Matthew)</u>	1883
<u>The Parables of Our Lord (Luke)</u>	1885
<u>The Book of Genesis (Expositor's Bible)</u>	1888
<u>The First Epistle to the Corinthians (Expositor's Bible)</u>	1889
<u>The Gospel of St. John (Vol. I) (Expositor's Bible)</u>	1891
<u>The Gospel of John (Vol. II) (Expositor's Bible)</u>	1892
<u>The Visions of a Prophet: Studies in Zechariah</u>	1895 (This first appeared in published form as a series in <u>The Expositor</u> , third series Vols. 3 & 4, 1886.)

Repetition.

Dods often preached the same sermon several times at Renfield Church.¹ It was a common practice for him to repeat a sermon three times, and occasionally even four times. The intervening periods varied from ten months² to fifteen years,³ with an average time-lapse of four and one-half years. However, he preached some sermons as often as three times within three years!⁴ He also would repeat an entire lecture series.⁵ In 1882 he allowed only four months to elapse before he began to repeat his series on "The Teaching of Jesus." Portions of this same series reappeared in 1887, which permitted less than a three years interval between the last sermon of the second appearance and the first sermon of the third.

The way in which he repeated his sermons can be seen from the following examples:

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1. Of his sermon manuscripts (over three hundred in number) 52% were preached more than once at Renfield Church; 24% were preached three times; and 6% were preached four times.
 2. E.g. Sermon MS., "Living Water," John 4:10. See page 79. of this thesis.
 3. E.g. Sermon MS., "Thanksgiving," Colossians 3:15, first preached in Oct. 1868. Repeated a second time Oct. 1883.
 4. E.g. Sermon MS., "Living Water," John 4:10.
 5. See page 76 of this thesis.

"Yet There is Room"
 Luke 14:22

"Indecision"
 I Kings 18:21

"119th Psalm -- 4th Section"
 Psalm 119:25

September 1865
 September 1868
 December 1875
 December 1877

3 years elapsed
 7 years elapsed
 2 years elapsed

Preached the first time
 Preached a second time
 Preached a third time
 Preached a fourth time

January 1866
 August 1868
 March 1886

2½ years elapsed
 8 years elapsed

"Humiliation of Christ -- An Example to Us"

August 1868
 September 1870
 July 1876

2 years elapsed
 6 years elapsed

"The Besetting Sin"

October 1870
 December 1874
 March 1879
 September 1884

4 years elapsed
 5 years elapsed
 5 years elapsed

"Christ's Spiritual Family"

July 1872
 December 1874
 July 1877
 June 1879

1½ years elapsed
 2½ years elapsed
 2 years elapsed

"Living Water"

November 1873
 January 1876
 September 1880
 November 1887

2 years elapsed
 4½ years elapsed
 7 years elapsed

"Slowness in Knowing Christ"

September 1873
 February 1876
 December 1876
 November 1880

17 months elapsed
 10 months elapsed
 4 years elapsed

"The Syrophenician Woman"

March 1874
 July 1876
 January 1878
 October 1885

2 years elapsed
 1½ years elapsed
 7 years elapsed

Matthew 15:21-28

September 1881
 January 1884
 April 1887

3 years elapsed
 3 years elapsed

In a limited way, Dods began this practice of repeating sermons in 1867 (his third year at Renfield), and continued it with increasing regularity until his final year at Renfield in 1889. There are various possible explanations for this custom. Repetition was a vital part of his own learning process. From the time he was sixteen he made a habit each week of trying to recall that which he had read the previous week.¹ He did not hesitate to re-read a worthwhile book many times in order fully to grasp its purpose and meaning.² This same principle probably influenced his view of preaching. It was reasonable to assume that the sermons on which he had spent much time and effort could not be fully grasped by his congregation on one hearing any more than a good book could be comprehended fully on one reading. In both cases, a second, third, and even fourth consideration was necessary and advisable.

This frequent repetition could have been necessitated by a need to preach the same messages to a largely different evening audience. A city church often has two distinct groups attending its services -- one in the morning and the other in the evening, with only a slight overlapping. If this were the case at Renfield, the preaching of the same sermons would have been very practical. A delay of several months or several years would have been in consideration of those who attended both morning and evening services. This, of course, does not account for the third and fourth presentation of the same sermons.

1. See pages 9-10 of this thesis.

2. See page 14 of this thesis.

Still a third explanation could be found in his need for more time. The practice of preaching one old sermon and one new sermon each week gave him more time for preparation of the new sermons. It also enabled him to give more attention to his work as an author, editor, and critic.

In any case, this system of repetition further revealed the teaching tendencies of Dods. Among other things, his sermons were intended to instruct,¹ and the possibility of lasting instruction was increased by means of repetition, as he so clearly stated in his "Introductory Sermon at Renfield Church, August 7th, 1864:"

Men must not only be converted but admonished continually to bring forth fruits meet for repentance. Men must not only be impressed but must be taught how to maintain their impressions and how to let their force tell upon their lives...And for this end it is not enough to make a casual or occasional statement that personal holiness is the "proper and indeed necessary accompaniment of faith," but the morality so constantly and largely inculcated in the New Testament is to be constantly and fully enforced from the pulpit. Men...must have the details of duty plainly set before them, the motives of it again and again applied to them and its peremptory claims vigorously and repeatedly enforced. Underlining not in the original.²

Treatment and Development of Major Themes.

Christ. The central theme of Dods' preaching was Christ. All else was subordinate to this. His friends testified that even his casual conversations often included some reference to

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1. Dods, MSS. Lectures, "Closing Address for Bala Theological College, 1898," pp. 3-4.
 2. Dods, MSS. Sermons, "Introductory Sermon at Renfield Church, II Corinthians 4:5," pp. 5-6.

Christ. Alexander Whyte, one of Dods' most intimate and life-long friends, mentioned this fact in his Inaugural Address as Principal of New College. "Whatever we started off with in our conversations, we soon made across country somehow...to Jesus of Nazareth, to His thirty years, and then to His three years, to His death and His resurrection and His indwelling."¹ Hugh R. Mackintosh, another friend who knew him intimately, further explained that Dods "was little given to religious conversation, but now and then he spoke out, and one saw how instinctively he sought refuge in the thought of Christ."²

His emphasis on Christ was as (in)conspicuous in the sermons of his probationary years as in those of his later ministry. For example his sermon on Revelation 3:7-13, entitled "Philadelphia," was a typical sermon of his early ministry. Near its close he devoted one long paragraph to a simplified presentation of Christ which included warm personal appeals to trust in Christ.

He is holy, and He is true. He that keeps the gate of the kingdom is One that will not suffer to enter anything that will defile and mar the pure and unshaded glory within. He will not suffer to enter in that thing which has made you weak, and has preyed on your weakness. He is holy, so that His truth you may trust to the utmost. The word of His calling is not the utterance of a sudden flood of feeling; it is the true expression of His eternally holy nature that seeks the highest good of all that lives, and will make you like to Himself, that His joy may be yours. He is true. Search inwards to the root of the motive of the offer He makes to you, and you will only find out more and more how genuine is the sincerity of His love. You will find much that does not

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1. Alexander Whyte, Former Principals of the New College, Edinburgh (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1909), pp. 46-47. See also James S. Stewart, The Strong Name, (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1940), p. 92.
 2. British Weekly, April 29, 1909.

appear at first sight, much that you do not expect, but all only more over-whelmingly proving His truth. He is true in the offer He makes, true in His word; therefore go to Him openly and frankly. Do not go with any false pretext, as if you had to do with some one who does not know for whom it is He provides salvation. Christ knows that 'the whole need not a physician, but they that are sick:' it is not because there is a likeness between you and Himself that He invites you to eternal communion, but because He is true, and knows and acts upon the unlikeness between you and Himself, who is holy. Your hope is in this, that Christ is true, and has faced that truth, which you so fear to face,--the truth of your sin, the fact of your hopeless state. His is a truth you may depend upon, not only because He has pledged His word--His name as Saviour, but because truth lies deep in His character. He is holy, and therefore to eternity is true, not only in word, but in deed. He not only acts up to His own word, but acts up to the requirements of every case--acts according to the truth. Take His character in detail, and truth will be found in every part of it. His love is true. He suffered and died for you, not for a mere show of love,--not, forsooth, in order to persuade you of His love,--but because His love prompted Him to do this. He did not think He was doing too much, because He was acting from true and genuine love,--so true that it required Him to do all, to leave nothing undone that it could be done for those He loved. And because He is holy and true, that love continues the same now. He is not less selfish now that He is in His reward. You may act now on that love, as if He were yet upon the cross.¹

In the sermons of Dods, Christ was always portrayed as attractive, winsome, admirable, and worthy of the utmost loyalty, confidence, and praise. His sermons repeatedly reminded men of Christ's joyful obedience to God and His intense devotion to men. Undoubtedly, those who regularly heard these sermons soon agreed with the minister of Renfield Church that "Christ...reveals a God we can with our whole heart and mind choose and worship; a

1. Dods, The Epistles of Our Lord To The Seven Churches of Asia (Edinburgh: John MacLaren, 1867), pp. 142-144. This sermon was first preached in the third year of his probation. See Early Letters, p. 385. Other sermons of his early ministry which exemplified this emphasis on Christ were: "Christ, the Image of God," Coloss. 1:15; "The Friend of Sinners," Luke 15:2; "All Things Given in Christ," Rom. 8:32.

God who appeals to our reason, our conscience, our heart alike."¹ What we require to know about God, Dods stressed, is that He is supreme in the moral world, supreme in holiness and in love. But merely to tell us that He is so will not serve our turn. "We must see Him for ourselves, and we must see Him in such circumstances as give us opportunity to judge. We must see His holiness and His love tested." We must have proof of His love and of His holiness which appeal to our own sense of what love and holiness are. A manifestation of God's love in some transcendental form altogether different in kind from what we know as love would not suffice.

But when God comes and meets us on the plane of human morality and needs, when He exhibits holiness in dealing with the veritable temptations of human life, when He expresses His love in the terms dictated by the wants and miseries and yearnings of men, when we see that Divine love is intenser human love, and that Divine holiness is perfect human holiness, we recognize that this is the true God and our God. We know God, and we owe it to Christ that we know Him...Christ who alone has given us the knowledge of God, who alone uttered God in human life, who did not merely tell us about God, and speak to us of a remote, unattainable Power, but brought God into human life and lived God out in human forms.²

Thus, the sermons preached at Renfield Free Church constantly exalted Christ as the supreme revelation of God. This inexhaustible theme appeared almost in every sermon, whether the text was from the New Testament or from the Old. If he were dealing with the subject of "The Stater in the Fish's Mouth" (Matt 17:24-27), he found it easy to draw attention to the unexpected yet highly

1. Dods, "Forgiveness," Coloss. 1:14 and II Cor. 5:19, Christ and Man (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1909), p. 146. This book is a collection of sermons published posthumously. These sermons were not selected for the press by Dods himself, but by his friend, H.R. Mackintosh, who regarded them as representative of Dods' preaching as a whole.

2. Ibid., p. 147.

effective manner in which Jesus revealed God.

It was quite true that He was God's Son, and that it was an incongruity in Him to be paying tax to Himself, for that was what it amounted to; but men were not to be convinced of His Divinity by His standing upon His rights and compelling them to submit to Him, but by the unrivalled depths of His humiliation, by His Divine lowliness and meekness and power of submission.¹

Yet, with similar ease and regularity could he find it appropriate to mention Christ's revelation of God in sermons on Old Testament texts such as Malachi.

...You must measure all by the revelation of Himself God has given you in Christ. We know that One God, and that is He who is known through and in Christ. Every view of God which does not harmonize with that we must reject wherever we find it.²

So naturally inclined was he to preach Christ in this way, that he often had to check himself lest he over-emphasize Christ to the neglect of the Father. "As regards the Divinity of Christ," he once said, "I can only say that without that I have no religion, and indeed no God. My danger has, in fact, always been to make too much rather than too little of the Divinity of Christ, to put the Father too much in the background, and speak too constantly as if Christ alone were our God. All who know my preaching know that this is so."³

Dods in his sermons explained that it was Christ's death for His people which gave Him the unique claim on their allegiance and devotion. It was not, however, the mere fact of His dying which gave Christ this place, and which claims the regard and trust of

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1. Dods, "Stater in the Fish's Mouth," The Expositor, 3rd Series, 7:463, 1888.
 2. Dods, "Malachi," The Expositor, 3rd Series, 6:420, 1887.
 3. Aberdeen Free Press, April 27, 1909. He made this statement during the controversy of 1890. See pp. 149-173 of this thesis.

all men. "In Christ's death there was what there could be in none other: a sacrifice for the sins of men and an atonement for their sins." Through this death sinners find a way back to God and assurance of salvation. "There was a work accomplished by it which the purest of men could not help him in, but must himself depend upon and receive the benefit of. Christ by His death is marked off from all men, He being the Redeemer, they the redeemed."¹

That which pleased God in the sacrifice of Christ was the spirit which the sacrifice expressed, "the perfect obedience and the perfect love with which Christ did and endured all that was required--the perfect and faultless abandonment of His own will to God--the reality of the self-sacrifice."² In Christ there was a perfect hatred of the sin for which He made atonement, a perfect conformity of spirit to God's judgment regarding sin, even when that judgment was falling painfully on Himself. "It was not Christ's suffering in itself which was pleasing to the Father, but it was infinitely pleasing to Him to find at last, in humanity, a perfect response to His own feeling against sin, and a perfect return to Him." In the human body of Christ He saw a perfect submission to every pain, in acknowledgment of God's justice, and in love to man. "In that hour when most sorely tempted to mistrust God and to hate men, Christ maintained His

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1. Dods, "The Factions," I Cor. 1:10ff., The First Epistle To The Corinthians (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1889), p. 44. Each chapter of this book was first preached as a sermon at Renfield Free Church, Glasgow. See p. 76 of this thesis.
 2. Dods, "Christ's Sacrifice and Ours," Eph. 5:1-2; Christ and Man, p. 29. In 1890 Dods said this sermon presented his view of the Atonement.

faith in the Father, and His love for His brethren; and this it was which made the sacrifice acceptable.¹

By his use of the lecture method in preaching, he was able to treat the life of Christ in a very detailed and methodical way. His first series using the "Life of Christ" as his theme began in March, 1868, and continued until March, 1870. In this series he preached on the Incarnation, Jesus' life in Nazareth, His Baptism, His temptation, His miracles, His encounter with men, His death, His resurrection, and many other phases of Jesus' life. This series also gave him many opportunities to set forth and stress the Humanity of Jesus, a doctrine which was always in danger of being neglected in his day. Principal W.M. MacGregor, D.D., in referring to the second half of the nineteenth century, explained:

There had grown up in Scotland a tendency akin to what theologians call Doketism [sic] a phase of belief in which the Divine obscures the human and makes it shadowy and unreal. Men had come to present Jesus always as an official, a Person in the mysterious Trinity, fulfilling His part in the work of redemption, and they turned away from the equally Scriptural idea that He grew in knowledge as we do, and was tempted as we are, and was tried and discouraged as we...The Church had now to get back... to the braver and more evangelical spirit of Luther and Calvin. That was Dods' appointed work in his age.²

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1. Loc. cit. In his Lecture MS. on "The Death of Christ; The Two Synoptic Sayings," Dods told his students: "Accepting Christ as your Saviour" is a misleading expression sometimes when referring to forgiveness. There are times when it is better to invite others to accept Christ's sacrifice as their sacrifice... Christ offered Himself as a sacrifice to God. He yielded Himself wholly to the will of God. Indeed, He was the only perfect sacrifice which has ever been offered...And everyone who uses this Lamb of God as his sacrifice is accepted of God, i.e., everyone who says, "This is the sacrifice I would make if only I could." p. 27.
 2. W.M. MacGregor, "Marcus Dods," Missionary Record, June, 1909. Dr. Walter Ross Taylor expressed a similar view before the 1889 General Assembly: "Some years ago the Church passed through a transition with reference to its views in regard to the Eternal

MacGregor, as Dods' successor at Renfield Free Church, was in an advantageous position to evaluate the effect of Dods' preaching. It is interesting that he singled out Dods as one of the men most responsible for minimizing Docetism in Scotland. Many men who sat under Dods at New College heard him say, "The Gospels represent Jesus as acquiring knowledge in the usual way by inquiry and learning; they represent Him as passing from ignorance to knowledge."¹ But as early as 1868, the Renfield congregation heard him warn, "There is a defect in our conception of the Lord's human nature until we attribute to him the mental limitations as well as the bodily weaknesses of our nature."² However, Dods' purpose in preaching on the life of Christ was not to dispel Docetism. It was to win men to Christ and to strengthen them in the faith. "It is the presentation of Christ as He is presented in the written Gospels, the narrative of His life and death without note or comment, theory or inference, argument or appeal, which stands in the first rank of efficiency as a means of evangelizing the world." "Make men see Christ, the Crucified, clear before them," he urged, "and you need not tell them to repent

Word, the God-man....The divines of the seventeenth century, by their able and triumphant vindication of the Divinity of Christ, had brought that aspect of His Person into chief prominence for many years thereafter; and His humanity was...overshadowed. But more recently, men's thoughts and hearts had turned with special interest to the fact of His true humanity..." Proceedings and Debates of the General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland, 1889, pp. 78-80.

1. Dods, Lecture MS., "Limitations of Christ's Knowledge," p. 12.
2. Dods, Sermon MS., "Christ's Youth," p. 7. The thoroughness and high standard of these early sermons were reflected in the fact that many paragraphs from them were used without alteration in his New College lectures. E.g., pp. 13 and 19 of lecture "Limitations of Christ's Knowledge" were first written as pp. 7 and 9 of sermon "Christ's Youth."

and believe; if that sight does not make them repent, no telling of yours will make them."¹

After preaching his sermons on the "Life of Christ" a second time (September 1876-May 1877), Dods turned to a new series entitled "The Teaching of Jesus," which became his most time consuming series, covering a total of forty-five months.² In some ways, this was just a new approach to the life of Christ, for, as Dods himself said:

One of the distinctive notes...of our Lord's teaching, which differentiates it from that of some of the greatest teachers, is that it shines out through His Person and life as clearly and more convincingly than from His words, and that his words are for the most part explanatory of what He was and was doing. If we ask what gave His teaching its impressiveness, its unique and abiding influence, the answer must be, that He not only pointed out the way of life but led in it, that He was Himself the embodiment of His teaching, and illustrated the necessity and possibility of attaining the ideal He preached.³

Fellowship with Christ. In conjunction with his preaching on Christ he stressed fellowship with Christ. The explanation of his emphasis on this theme was revealed in Dods' own words, "Experimentally a man finds he cannot feed his spirit on doctrines, on thoughts about religion, on devout aspirations and righteous resolves, but only on personal fellowship with Christ."⁴

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1. Dods, "The Foolishness of Preaching," I Cor. 1:17-2:5, The First Epistle to the Corinthians, pp. 51-52.
 2. November 1880-April 1882; November 1882-June 1884; February 1887-December 1887. From this series came his two books on the parables plus many articles for religious journals. It also formed the basis of his New College lectures on the "Teaching of Jesus."
 3. Dods, Lecture MS., "Teaching of Jesus," p. 8.
 4. Dods, "In Remembrance of Me" Luke 22:19, Christ and Man, p. 113.

The grand peculiarity of Christ is that He demands our personal allegiance. He does not throw out doctrine and let who will receive it; He does not utter His views of things and leave them to work in men's minds. He forms a society, He calls men to Himself, and invites their trust, their love, their service. And experience tells us that until we give Him this, we give Him too little; too little for our purposes as well as for His.¹

...We are called to the fellowship of Jesus Christ. This is satisfying; all else that calls us in life is defective and incomplete. Without this fellowship with what is holy and eternal, all we find in life seems trivial or is embittered to us by the fear of loss...Believe in God's call, listen to it, strive to maintain yourself in the fellowship of Christ, and every year will tell you that God, who has called you, is faithful and is bringing you nearer and nearer to what is stable, happy, and satisfying.²

It is entire belief in Jesus and entire devotedness to Him, as a Person, that enables us to live as we should morally.³

"Live with Christ, learn to carry His image with you, learn to adore Him, learn to love Him, and infallibly...you will become conformed, as God means you to become conformed, to the image of His Son."⁴ "Only in fellowship with Him does our self-control receive adequate support. He has views of life, plans, present work in the world, which if we enter into we shall find ourselves lifted to the right level of human life and trained to all that is best in human nature. It is in Christ's service you find true life and true manhood."⁵ "Join yourself to Christ...and you are

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1. Dods, "Putting On Christ," Romans 8:14, Christ and Man, p. 80.
 2. Dods, "The Church in Corinth," I Cor. 1:2-9, The First Epistle to the Corinthians, pp. 28-29.
 3. The closeness of the connection between Christ and His disciples is explained in his volume The Gospel of St. John, Vol. I, under the title "Jesus, the Bread of Life," John 6, p. 219.
 4. Dods, "How to Become Like Christ," II Cor. 3:18, How To Become Like Christ (London: James Clarke & Co., 1898), p. 12. This also is a book of sermons.
 5. Dods, "The Trials of Youth," Lamentations 3:27, Why Be A Christian? (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1896), p. 19. These were sermons addressed primarily to young men.

brought into a connection which lends reality and consistency to your whole life."¹

Sin. Closely linked with his preaching on fellowship with Christ was his preaching on sin. Fellowship with Christ is broken by sin, but unless the Christian has an intelligent grasp of what constitutes sin, he is an easy victim of its deceitfulness. "One sin consciously retained, one command or expression of Christ's will unresponded to, makes our whole connection with Him unsettled and insecure, our confessions and repentances untrue and hardening, our prayers hesitating and insincere, our love for Christ hollow, our life inconsistent, vacillating, and unprofitable."² Therefore, Dods used much of his time in the pulpit informing his congregation of their enemy, sin. He devoted many complete sermons to this theme; for example, "Sin--Its Nature," "Secret Sins," "The Besetting Sins," "Sin--Its Deceitfulness," "Wilful Sin," "Ignorance of Sin," "Sinful Thoughts," "Sin Finding Out,"³ Professor A.B. Bruce felt that Dods preached too much on sin,⁴ but certainly Dods did not think so. He was painfully aware of the ineffectiveness of the Christian's warfare against sin when the Christian did not see and understand exactly what sin involved. It was not that he believed his people were totally unmindful of sin. On the contrary, he said, "In most Christian people there is a great expenditure of thought and of

1. Dods, Sermon MS., "Mission of the Apostles," Matt. 9:36ff, p. 14.

2. Dods, "God's Husbandry and Building," I Cor. 3:5-23, The First Epistle to the Corinthians, p. 93.

3. All of these are Sermon MSS. except the last which is found in Christ and Man, pp. 188-199.

4. See Biblical World, 7:251, April, 1896.

feeling about sin; their spirit is probably more exercised about their sins than about anything else," but to little or no avail, because "there remains in the heart some reluctance quite to kill and put an end to sin."¹ They may be willing or even intensely anxious to escape the blows sin aims at them; they may be desirous to wound, hamper, and limit their sin, and keep it under control, "and yet be reluctant to slay it outright."² It is this which Dods wanted his people to be mindful of, because the result of unreal contests is detrimental. When we spend much effort in conquering sin and find it as lively as ever, the spirit is strained and hurt by putting out force on nothing. It is less able than before to resist sin, less believing, and less hopeful. It becomes confused and disheartened, disbelieves in itself, and scoffs at fresh resolves and endeavors. If the Christian is aware of this result, Dods reasoned, he is in a better position to combat sin.

1. Dods, "Not All Who Run Win," I Cor. 9:23-27, The First Epistle To The Corinthians, p. 223.

2. Ibid., p. 224.

III. THE INFLUENCE AND EFFECTIVENESS OF HIS PREACHING

Growth in Membership and Attendance at Renfield Church.

Dods began his ministry at Renfield Church under disadvantageous conditions. Preceding his arrival in Glasgow was an untruthful rumor which implied that he was "unsound on the Sabbath question." This baseless rumor upset seven elders to such an extent that they withdrew from Renfield before Dods was inducted on the seventh of August, 1864. This also resulted in the withdrawal of fifty other members (fourteen of whom were in the families of the seven elders).¹ This loss of fifty-seven persons left Renfield with a total membership of only 345 on the Sunday Dods preached his first sermon as the new minister. But conditions quickly changed for the better under the influence of Dods' life and sermons.

The most conspicuous evidence of improvement was the rapid increase in church membership. (A complete chart of membership growth is given on page 95). On October 17, 1864, just ten weeks after Dods' ordination, the Session received twenty-eight new members.² Three weeks later forty-four new members were added.³ The following months saw a further increase, so that on the nineteenth of April, 1865, the Session could report to Glasgow Presbytery a total membership of 443, thirty-nine more than the previous year's total.⁴ This impressive increase in membership could be directly related

1. Renfield Free Church Session Minute Book, Number 3, pp. 248-249.

2. Ibid., p. 266.

3. Ibid., p. 268.

4. Ibid.

to the effective sermons which were coming from the Renfield pulpit, and served to substantiate the opinion of P. Carnegie Simpson, who regarded Dods' pulpit influence as one "of an almost unique character."¹

Of special significance also was the marked increase in church attendance at Renfield. The number in attendance each Sunday soon reached a figure greater than that of the church enrolment.² One who was associated with Renfield reported that every pew always was filled when Dods preached at Renfield.³

The chart on the following page sets forth the Session's official record of communicants and gives a limited record of the Sabbath attendance at Renfield Church.

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1. P. Carnegie Simpson, The British Monthly, 4:185, March, 1904.
 2. See chart on the following page.
 3. P. Carnegie Simpson, loc. cit.

Renfield Free Church, Glasgow
Membership and Attendance Chart¹

<u>YEAR</u>	<u>NUMBER ON ROLL</u>	<u>AVERAGE ATTENDANCE ON SABBATH</u>
1864 (17th March)	404	
(Dods inducted August 4th)		
1864 (27th September)	345	
1865 (8th March)	400	
1865 (19th April)	443	
1866 (Spring) ²	474	
1867	483	
1868	521	
1869	542	
1870	560	
1871	556	(Due to severe illness Dods preached only four times during 1871)
1872	554	580
1873	533	600
1874	554	
1875	568	600
1876	582	
1877	601	
1878	609	
1879	609	
1880	584	
1881	587	
1882	554 +	
1883	582	
1884	599	
1885	605	
1886	624	
1887	623	
1888	626	
1889	606	

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1. Membership figures were taken from the following Minute Books of the Renfield Free Church: Book No. 3, pages 238, 248, 262, 268, 296. Book No. 4, pages 29, 51, 73, 108, 130, 157, 178, 211, 236, 267. Book No. 5, pages 29, 67, 105, 145, 173, 199, 223, 245, 267, 296, 314. Book No. 6, pages 18, 41. The attendance record was taken from p. 291, Book No. 4.
 2. Reports to Presbytery were made in the spring of each year.
 - + Possil Park mission, which was under the direction of the Renfield Church Session, called its first minister in this year.

Influence on Young Men of Glasgow.

In Glasgow Dods was known as a man of unusual influence on the young men of the city. This was such an outstanding feature of his ministry that, in 1877, a number of ministers of Glasgow Presbytery used it as their reason for preferring not to deal openly with the charges which were being made against Dods, lest the publicity adversely affect his influence on the young men of Glasgow.¹

A.B. Bruce, a resident professor in Glasgow, stated that Dods was one of the few who could "catch and hold the ear of young men by making them feel that he valued their ideals, understood their religious difficulties, and sympathized with them under their temptation;...while his hair was getting gray, he continued in heart to be a young man himself."² Henry Drummond, who heard Dods on many occasions, gave a further insight into the impressions which young men had while hearing Dods.

Without ever turning into them, you feel as you go along that he has been down every difficulty along the road, had heard all possible suggestions, been tempted by all available promises, knows all that the guidebooks have said and that all previous travelers have seen and heard.³

James Denney credited Dods with possessing a gift which appealed to young and old alike. "In preaching," he wrote, in a letter to W. Robertson Nicoll, "Dods had in a higher degree than

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1. See p. 118 of this thesis.
 2. A.B. Bruce, op. cit., p. 247.
 3. Henry Drummond, op. cit., p. 71.

any man I ever knew the power which is most to be coveted by a preacher--that of making the obvious impressive."¹

Thoughtful young men and women were drawn to Renfield Church; and students especially came to value the stimulus of his preaching. Years later when one of these former students was informed of Dods' death, he wrote the following tribute which was published in the Glasgow Herald:

There are many men at or over middle life who will learn to-day with sad hearts that Marcus Dods is dead. They will be carried back in memory to student days, when, perplexed by doubts and difficulties in the sphere of religion, they were able to preserve their faith largely through the influence and teaching of the minister of Renfield Free Church. Thirty years ago the back gallery of this edifice was the haunt of arts and divinity students who were made welcome there without the payment of seat rents, and many were the note-books seen there on Sunday forenoons. Men who are now filling conspicuous positions in pulpit and university in this country and America, in industry and commerce, will to-day acknowledge their debt to the extra-mural teaching they received on these far off Sunday mornings.²

The most outstanding of the young men of Glasgow who came under Dods' influence was Henry Drummond. To his friends Drummond let it be known that he claimed Dods as "one of the greatest influences that had come across" his life.³ He summarized the reasons for the influence and effectiveness of Dods' sermons in the following words:

On thinking it [sermon] over when you go home, you perceive that the after result is almost in proportion to the unconsciousness of the effect at the time. You know exactly why the sermon stops just then: there was nothing more to be said, the proof was final. You perceive why the great

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1. James Denney, Letters of Principal James Denney to W. Robertson Nicoll, 1893-1917 (London: Hodder and Stoughton Limited, 1920), p. 169.
 2. Glasgow Herald, April, 29, 1909.
 3. British Weekly, p. 386, March 18, 1897.

omission which annoyed you at the time was made: the thing you waited for was not in the text. You understand why one position was hopelessly irreconcilable with another position you held when you entered the Church; because that other position was not true. You do not question now that it was not true, you see it to be untrue. You discover easily why the appeal did not move you more. You have been accustomed to the sounds of passion vibrating in the chords in another's soul. Now your own soul seethes and trembles. These effects are not the work of a man. They are the operations of the Spirit of truth. You know at last why the man was so hidden, why he had no cunning phrases, why beautiful words do not linger in your memory, why a preacher so impersonal, and to whom you were so impersonal, a preacher so wholly uninterested in you, so innocent himself of taking you by the throat, has yet taken his subject by the throat and planted it down before your inmost being, so you cannot be rid of it. You know that you have heard no brilliant or awakening oratory, but you feel that you have been searched and overawed, that unseen realities have looked you in the eye, and asked you questions, and made you a more humble and a more obedient man.¹

Invitations to Other Churches.

After his first year in Glasgow, Dods began to receive numerous invitations to preach in other churches as a guest minister.² These invitations were an indication of the genuine effectiveness of Dods' preaching at Renfield Church. As a probationer he received very few invitations from other churches to preach as a guest minister. Yet, less than two years after going to Glasgow he received more than he could accept. In 1866, as in almost every succeeding year, he visited over ten other churches. However, some years he visited as many as sixteen and seventeen churches (1880 and 1883 respectively). These invitations came from churches in many different parts of the

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1. Henry Drummond, op. cit., p. 70. See George A. Smith, Life of Henry Drummond (New York: Doubleday and McClure Co., 1899), pp. 143-144.
 2. Information for this paragraph was taken from the collection of sermon manuscripts. On each of Dods' sermon MS. he listed the dates and places where the sermon was preached.

British Isles, including Aberdeen, Edinburgh, Liverpool, Manchester, London, Belfast, and many other areas. Certain congregations made it a regular yearly practice to extend an invitation to Dods. Free St. George's Church, Edinburgh, long known as a church of distinction, was one which invited him each year.

Requests from Editors and Publishers.

Dods' sermons were not limited in influence to the personal preaching of Dods himself, for many of them were widely circulated in pamphlet and book form, as well as in newspapers and magazines. Before he left Renfield Church in 1889, requests for permission to print his sermons were coming from numerous editors, including many in the United States. Among the British editors were those serving The Expositor, Good Words, British Weekly, The Christian World Pulpit, The British Weekly Pulpit, and others. Those in America included the editors of Biblical World, Outlook, The Homiletic Review, Magazine of Christian Literature, The Independent, Lutheran Church Review, Christian Union, and others.

History of a Sermon.

When Dods, as a probationer, humorously wrote, "I think of Spurgeon and his thousands and compare them to my tens and draw conclusions,"¹ little did he realize that one day his sermons also would be reaching thousands, though not in the same manner as those of Spurgeon. Dods' sermons required more time in reaching vast audiences. After being preached at Renfield Church, a selected

1. Dods, Early Letters, p. 157.

number of his sermons were preached in as many as thirty¹ different churches. Then, many of these same sermons were published, some of them in more than one periodical or book.² Finally, in a few cases, the published sermons were preached again by Dods.³

The history of the following sermons indicates the extensive use which Dods made of his well prepared messages:

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1. Dods, Sermon MS., "Rich Young Ruler, Matthew 19."
 2. "The Trials of Youth" was published in British Weekly, Oct. 23, 1890; the Magazine of Christian Literature (New York), January, 1891; and in his book How to Become Like Christ, 1897. "The Baptist's Message to Jesus" was published in The Expositor, March, 1895, and the Magazine of Christian Literature, April, 1895. "St. Paul on Going to Law" was published in The Expositor in 1875, pp. 142-55, and in his The First Epistle to the Corinthians, 1889, pp. 131-145.
 3. "The Christian Race" Heb. 12:1-2, published in the Good Words of 1896, was preached fifteen times between 1898 and 1902. "The Flying Roll and Ephah" Zechariah 5, printed in The Expositor of 1886 was preached in 1894 at the Free High Church, Edinburgh, and Free St. George's, Edinburgh.

"LIVING WATER" John 4:10

1873 (September) First time in Renfield
 1874--1876.....Preached 11 other places
 1876 (February) Second time in Renfield
 1876 (June--November).....Preached 4 other places
 1876 (December) Third time in Renfield
 1889 (December).....Preached in Free St. George's
 Edinburgh, for the second
 time.
 (First time was in 1876)
 1890 (January).....Published in Christian
World Pulpit.
 1891Published in book, Gospel
of St. John, Vol. I.

"INDISCRETE IMPORTUNITY" Hosea 13:11

1872 (May) First time in Renfield
 1872 (May).....Preached 1 other place
 1874 (September) Second time in Renfield
 1877 (March).....Preached 1 other place
 1877 (November) Third time in Renfield
 1880 (July).....Preached 1 other place
 1886 (June) Fourth time in Renfield
 1897Published in book, How to
Become Like Christ.

"PEACE GIVEN BY CHRIST" John 14:27

1874 (February)	First time in Renfield
1874.....	Preached 2 other places
1876 (September)	Second time in Renfield
1876.....	Preached 1 other place
1879 (March)	Third time in Renfield
1882 (March)	Fourth time in Renfield
1892.....	Published in book, <u>Gospel of St. John</u> , Vol. II.

"LAST STATE WORSE THAN FIRST" Matthew 12:38--45

1881 (May)	First time in Renfield
1883 (March)	Second time in Renfield
1887 (February)	Third time in Renfield
1888.....	Published in <u>The</u> <u>Expositor</u> , pp. 223-231.

"THE CHRISTIAN RACE" Hebrews 12:1-2

1887 (September)	First time in Renfield
1889 (March)	Second time in Renfield
1889-1895.....	Preached in 6 other places
1896.....	Published in <u>Good Words</u> , pp. 562-564.
1898--1902.....	Preached in 15 other places

"THE BARREN FIG-TREE" Luke 13:6-9

1877 (December) First time in Renfield
 1878.....Preached 2 other places
 1880 (February) Second time in Renfield
 1885.....Published in book, The Parables of Our Lord,
 Second Series.

"SHAME OF A GOD'S DISPLEASURE" Numbers 12:14

1867 (March) First time in Renfield
 1867.....Preached 2 other places
 1870 (January) Second time in Renfield
 1870.....Preached 2 other places
 1877 (October) Third time in Renfield
 1897.....Published in book, How to Become Like Christ

"RICH YOUNG RULER" Matthew 19

1880 (September) First time in Renfield
 1880-1882.....Preached 9 other places
 1882 (January) Second time in Renfield
 1883-1899.....Preached 21 other places

"WHY BE RELIGIOUS?"

1895 (October).....Published in British Weekly
 1895 (December).....Published in The Magazine of Christian Literature
 (New York)
 1896.....Published in book, Why Be a Christian?

Conclusion.

"The vitality of a ministry," Dods repeatedly stressed, "depends upon the vitality of the minister's personal religion."¹ He was deeply persuaded that the initial hindrance to effective preaching was the lack of strong religious convictions and a personality penetrated with religious feeling. Divinity students were often told by Dods that "it is the man who preaches, not the sermon....The sermon is but the medium through which the personality of the preacher communicates itself to the audience."² "Certainly in the long run it is the man that tells rather than the sermon."³

This belief he also emphasized to his fellow ministers, as seen by the following statement which he made in a charge delivered to Mr. Hugh McMillan at his induction as minister of St. Peter's Church, Glasgow, the first of December, 1864:

You are aware that the difficulty of the work of the ministry lies mainly in this that it depends upon the character of the worker. It does not only require a certain professional training and skill but it requires that the character, the man himself be under certain influences, and also that the character be improving. To impress others you must yourself be impressed, and to edify others you must yourself be progressing.⁴

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1. Dods, Lecture MS., "Address to New College, Hampstead and United Colleges, Bradford, June, 1900," p. 16. Also Dods, On Preaching, p. 4.
 2. Dods, On Preaching, p. 4. "Address to Lancashire College, 18th June, 1896," p. 5; "Closing Address for Bala Theological College, 1898," p. 1; "Address to New College Hampstead and United Colleges, Bradford, June, 1900," p. 16. The last three references are in manuscript form.
 3. Dods, On Preaching, p. 4.
 4. Dods, Lecture MS., "Charge Delivered to Mr. Hugh McMillan at His Induction to the Charge of St. Peters on 1st Dec. 1864," p. 2.

His sermons often carried this same emphasis.

You must be what you wish others to become. If not, then certainly nothing that you can say is at all likely to compensate for the evil you may do by your character. It does not need that you intend evil to any; it will be out whether you mean it or no.¹

By his stress upon character, Dods unintentionally focussed attention upon the major reason for his own success as a minister--his own life was Christ-like. Those who were most intimately associated with him, those who had occasion to see him in many different circumstances, were the most outspoken about his Christ-like character. His only daughter, Mrs. A. Herbert Gray, speaking for herself and her three brothers, said, "We thought he was the best man we had ever met, and a perfect father."² William Robertson Nicoll,³ a close friend for almost twenty-five years, spoke in the most glowing terms of Dods.

He was the best friend and the most Christlike man I have ever known. He was in his daily work and conversation a living evidence of Christianity.

If it can truly be said of any one that he is naturally Christian, then it could be said of Dr. Dods. But he was a Christian in the full sense of the word, and all that was pure and high in him was reinforced by faith, by prayer, by the practice of the presence of God, by the imitation of Christ.

Another characteristic in which Dr. Dods excelled all other men known to me was his magnanimity.

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1. Dods, The Parables of Our Lord, first series (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1897), p. 84. See also p. 125 of this book and also Christ and Man, p. 137; First Epistles to the Corinthians, pp. 12, 116; What is a Christian, p. 15.
 2. Related in a personal interview with the writer in London, July 23, 1955.
 3. Editor of British Weekly, The Expositor, The British Monthly, The British Weekly Pulpit, The Bookman, The Expositor's Bible Series, Little Books on Religion, The Expositor's Greek Testament, The Theological Educator, all of which carried the writings of Dods.

He was the humblest of men...¹

Prof. Hugh R. Mackintosh, in commenting on Dods' preaching, said:

It was not merely the Biblical character of his thinking that made him so satisfying and convincing a preacher; it was his personality as a whole. His manhood was behind every word. Those who knew him will understand me when I say that Dods' face, as he stood in the pulpit, was an argument for the truth of Christianity. It had in it a calm and wholesome power that enabled men to give him their trust. He held men to religion by his character. "I am a Christian," was said to one of my friends the other day, "because Marcus Dods is one." The obvious sincerity of nature gave him great power over those whom the Church seldom touches.²

In an article in The Expositor Henry Drummond appropriately concluded his remarks about Dods with the following words:

In the profoundest sense Dr. Dods is a spiritual teacher, in the highest degree a moral force. What his people will remember, what his children inherit, his students bless him for, will be the impression he leaves with them of the tremendous reality of the spiritual life, the grandeur and inexhaustible glory of Christianity, the necessity and the urgency of consecrated service, the stimulus to holy living to be found, and to be found alone, in personal contact with Christ, crucified and risen.³

Thus, while Dods' training, experience, and ability accounted for much of his success as a minister, the most vital element of his success was found in his Christ-like character.

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1. W. Robertson Nicoll, Princes of the Church (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1921), pp. 234-6, 237, 241. See also T.H. Darlow William Robertson Nicoll (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1925), p. 205, for a letter by Nicoll to Prof. H.R. Mackintosh, March 13, 1909.
 2. British Weekly, April 29, 1909.
 3. Henry Drummond, op. cit., p. 76.

CHAPTER THREE

HIS TEACHING UNDER ATTACK

There is no single record of all the major controversies concerning Dods' teaching. The very significant case of 1877-78 has been consistently overlooked by historians although it is an important link in the history of the Free Church's advance to a more liberal view of inspiration.¹ This chapter includes a full discussion of the 1877-78 debates since they reflect the attitude and mind of the Free Church in the earliest period in which inspiration became an issue. Also included in this chapter are the accounts of Dods' role in the William Robertson Smith controversy, his election in 1889 as Professor of New Testament Exegesis in New College, and his case before the 1890 General Assembly of the Free Church.

1. That is, no more than a passing reference is ever made to this case and often even these passing references contain inaccurate or misleading information.

I. CHARGES BROUGHT AGAINST DODS' TEACHING 1877-1878.

Various writers have recorded that Marcus Dods was accused of heresy, but, in the strictest sense, this was not the case, for the charges against him were never reduced to the form of a libel by a church court.¹ During the years 1877-78 he was, however, formally charged with teaching views "of a dangerous character"² and he was informally accused of "unsoundness", "unfaithfulness to the Westminster Confession" and of publishing views "subversive to the very foundations of Christianity."³ The account of these charges which came before the courts of Presbytery, Synod, and General Assembly can be understood best when viewed chronologically.

Sermon on Revelation and Inspiration.

In 1876 Dods preached a sermon on "Revelation and Inspiration" which became, unintentionally, the center of a storm of controversy. In this sermon he attempted to explain that "the Bible, whether you accept it as an inspired book or not, is the book which has actually been the means of imparting to the world its best knowledge of God."⁴ He spent much time in making clear the distinction between God's revelation of Himself and the record of

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1. A libel was a necessary pre-requisite to the carrying out of a judicial process for the purpose of formally accusing him of heresy.
 2. Proceedings and Debates of the General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland, 1878, p. 237.
 3. Robert Bremmer, Is the Bible Infallible? Speeches in the Free Presbytery of Glasgow, (Glasgow: David Bryce & Son, 1878), p. 1. Robert Howie, The State of the Question (Glasgow: Charles Glass & Co., 1878), pp. 12, 35; The Daily Review, September 6, 1877.
 4. Dods, Revelation and Inspiration, (Third Edition, Glasgow: John N. Mackinlay, 1877), p. 14.

that revelation in the Bible. He emphasized this in the hope that his hearers could see that as far as the historical contents of Scripture are concerned revelation stands firm although there should prove to be no such thing as inspiration.¹

This was a subject to which Dods had given much thought and study, and he was especially eager to share with his hearers one important conclusion which can be drawn from the fact that the great object of the Bible is to convey to us an accurate idea of the revelation of God--"and that conclusion is that we must not expect it to teach anything else."² It was his conviction that much injustice had been done to the Bible by neglect of this very obvious truth.

It has been considered infallible not only in regard to the revelation it contains, but in regard to the whole form in which that revelation is conveyed to us, and so when errors and imperfections have been pointed out, those whose faith has rested on its verbal and universal infallibility, have received a violent shock as if revelation itself were being brought into danger. The truth is, it is no concern of the Bible's to teach history or science, or to correct all the erroneous impressions and popular fallacies which existed in the minds of those who contributed to the Scriptures. The information which its writers intended to convey to us, they were allowed to convey in the language of their own day and also in the style of thought of their own day. Their bad grammar and rudeness of style were not corrected, neither were their erroneous impressions regarding ordinary matters.³

His discussion of inspiration indicated that in Scotland he was in advance of his time, for he no longer held the theory of verbal inerrancy which had such widespread acceptance when he was a student in 1854-58, and which was still the prevalent view at the time this

1. Ibid., p. 4.

2. Ibid., p. 17.

3. Dods, Revelation and Inspiration, pp. 17-18.

sermon was written.¹ He first explained his view of inspiration by saying it was a spiritual gift and only indirectly a mental one. That is,

It illuminates the mind as enthusiasm does, by stimulating and elevating it; it enriches the memory as love does, by intensifying the interest in a certain object and by making the mind sensitive to its impressions and retentive of them. It brings light to the understanding, and wisdom to the spirit, as purity of intention does, or as a high aim in life does. But it is not a gift conferring intellectual acuteness where that did not previously exist, nor imparting any superhuman power of knowledge. If an error existed in the records used by the compiler of the Books of Chronicles, if the documents from which he was gathering his information mis-stated the numbers that fell in some battle, inspiration furnished him with no means of detecting such an error, any more than it furnished him with the ability to sit down and write the entire history of Israel out of his own brain without any documentary aid at all.²

That which distinguishes the writers of Scripture from all others is the fact that they had the revelation at first hand. In the case of the historical writers, they were eye-witnesses and therefore no subsequent writers can take their place and supersede their testimony. The same general truth Dods applied to those whose writings were not purely historical. It was Paul, for example, who most distinctly saw what Christianity really was and who communicated to the world the knowledge that the true religion, the religion of the spirit, had come.

This is the ultimate religious teaching the world needs or can have. True religion is to have one spirit with God. You may put it in a thousand variations; you may illustrate, reiterate, enforce it; but you cannot get into Paul's place and say it for the first time, neither can you say anything higher or deeper, for everything is here. Paul was, in point of fact, the man who saw what God meant in the revelation made in Christ.³

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1. Speeches in the Rev. Dr. Dods' Case (Glasgow: David Bryce & Son, 1878), p. 5; Proceedings and Debates, 1878, p. 238.
 2. Dods, Revelation and Inspiration, pp. 21-22.
 3. Ibid., p. 24.

This, Dods said, was mere matter of fact about which all were agreed, and in comparison with this it seems quite a secondary question to ask what was Paul's inspiration. For even if there were no such thing as inspiration, it still remains that in Paul's epistles we have the actual utterances which set clear before the understanding of men what the essence of the true religion is.

I, for my part, do not care what meaning a man attaches to the word "inspired," nor, indeed, whether he says these epistles are inspired or not, so long as he accepts their teaching. The only inspiration worth contending for is the ability to see and represent truly a revelation of God. I do not believe what Paul says, because I first believe him to be inspired; but I believe him to be inspired, because he brings light to my spirit, which can only have proceeded from God.¹

Dods continued by expressing in his own words the idea held by the Reformers that the soul does not need the intervention of any authority to bring it into contact with God and the truth, but that God and his truth have power to verify themselves to the individual.²

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1. Ibid., p. 25. This was Luther's position. Luther did not accept the gospel because it was written in a book he believed to be inspired, but he accepted it because it brought new life to his spirit and proved itself to be from God.
 2. In discussing "The Seat of Authority in Religion" Dods further explained that it is the "right and duty of the individual to deal with God directly and for himself....To accept the Bible on the Church's authority, and to accept every statement in it as infallible truth whether it awakes response in conscience or not, is to remain precisely in the Romanist's position....The Reformers maintained that the divinity of Scripture is self-evidencing, and can only be ascertained by the response it awakens in the individual..." The Magazine of Christian Literature, New York, 5:393, February, 1892. Also The Christian Union, New York, 45:12-13, January, 1892.

God may reveal Himself to us individually in some event of our own life, or in some long experience through which we are made to pass, and we may be more affected by such a close and impressive revelation of God than we have ever been by the Bible....And on consideration we do see that these revelations of God in our own life do not give any further information about God, but merely repeat and illustrate those truths regarding Him and His ways which have already been published in the great historical revelations which He has made.¹

He concluded by elaborating his original point that it is not faith in itself which the Bible seeks to create as its ultimate object, but faith in God.

The Bible does not seek to detain our faith or attention on itself, but that through it we may be able so to see God as to come into loving fellowship with Him. The Bible has not done its work until it takes us past itself, and makes us independent of it. It is so with every teacher. The student first believes in the circulation of the blood on the authority of his teacher; but, guided by his teacher, he experiments for himself and sees the things with his own mind....So when the Bible has done its work and has brought us into a living fellowship with God, when by its guidance we have come and acquainted ourselves with Him, we say to it as the Samaritans said to the woman, "Now we believe, not because of thy saying; for we have heard Him ourselves, and know that this is indeed the Christ, the Saviour of the world."...Doubtless many have so acquainted themselves with Christ that His image can never more be obliterated from their minds, nor their faith in Him destroyed by sickness, or blindness, or any disaster which might preclude them from the use of the Bible. But each new generation needs the testimony of the Scriptures, and in this life the Bible remains to us all the one unfailing reminder of Christ. Search the Scriptures, for they are they which testify of Christ, but it is Christ Himself who is the light of every man that cometh into the world.²

The First Controversy.

This sermon was preached in the first instance at the request of a Bible Society "for the purpose of showing what a boon the Bible

1. Dods, Revelation and Inspiration, pp. 25-26.

2. Ibid., pp. 26-27.

is to men,"¹ It was then preached by Dods to his own congregation and afterwards to the students of Glasgow University. This sermon proved to be so beneficial to some of the students that Dods was requested to publish it in order that "the benefit which some had experienced should be shared in by others."² But its publication was not welcomed by all. As soon as it appeared in print numerous objections to its contents were raised by persons throughout the Free Church, many of whom failed to perceive exactly what Dods was saying. In an attempt to alleviate this misunderstanding he wrote in the preface of the third edition a more detailed explanation of his views.³ Unfortunately this new preface aroused his critics even more.⁴ By August 1877 there were in circulation at least four pamphlets criticizing the content of Dods' preface and sermon⁵ and on September 5, 1877, the matter was first officially brought before the attention

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1. William Scrymgeour, The Case of Dr. Marcus Dods Correctly Stated, (Glasgow: James Maclehose, 1878), p. 6.
 2. Ibid. When Dods' sermon was preached at Glasgow University "it had the effect of dissipating the doubts of some who listened to it, and of showing them that perplexing questions in regard to Inspiration by which they had been distracted should have no influence in deterring them from accepting the Bible as the Word of God and from welcoming the message which it brings."
 3. The Third edition appeared in May, 1877.
 4. "In that Preface the errors were repeated and intensified," said Mr. R. Bremmer in a speech before Glasgow Presbytery, September 5. Daily Review, September 6. Also Hugh Martin, The Westminster Doctrine of the Inspiration of Scripture, (third edition; London: J. Nisbet & Co., 1877).
 5. In addition to the above pamphlet Hugh Martin wrote Letters to Marcus Dods, D.D. Both appeared in June 1877. In August William Mitchell published Criticism of Dr. Marcus Dods' Sermon, and James Smith published Professor Smith on the Bible and Dr. Marcus Dods on Inspiration.

of the Free Church Presbytery of Glasgow.¹

Prior to this meeting of Presbytery a conference composed of most of the ministers of Glasgow Presbytery was held to discuss the procedure which would be most prudent in dealing with the agitation and charges arising over Dods' sermon. When Dods was invited to speak he did so in a most brotherly spirit and gave lengthy explanations of his views, declaring that he would be prepared to state anywhere and everywhere his unhesitating, unchanged attachment to the whole doctrine of the Confession of Faith. Many of the ministers felt, as the result of this conference, that the matter should not be brought to Presbytery, but a strong-minded minority were determined that the issue should not terminate so readily.²

Mr. Robert Bremner, minister of the Free Gorbals Church, Pollockshields, and the most avid opponent of Dod's views, brought the subject before Presbytery on a motion asking for the appointment of a committee to examine the sermon and the preface for the purpose of reporting to the Presbytery "the nature and character of the views of divine revelation, and especially of the inspiration of the Holy Scripture set forth by Dr. Dods in these publications."³ Mr. Bremner's speech in support of this motion was printed in the daily newspapers and was later circulated in pamphlet form.⁴

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1. Minute Book. Free Presbytery of Glasgow, 1876-1879. Vol. VI., pp. 126-7.
 2. The Daily Review, September 6, 1877. See Dr. Adam's speech to Presbytery, September 5, Minute Book, p. 127.
 3. Minute Book, p. 126.
 4. Robert Bremner, Is the Bible Infallible? (Glasgow: David Bryce & Son, 1878).

At the outset of his fifty-one-page speech, Bremner gave expression to the reluctance with which he and others approached the painful duty of calling in "question the character and teaching of a brother so greatly esteemed by us all." But he quickly added that if they remained silent, they would "be guilty of unfaithfulness to God and to His truth."¹ Many of those who wrote pamphlets or made speeches criticizing Dods' sermon seemed offended by his reference to the other "great religions" besides Christianity and Judaism which possessed "canonical scriptures" and "a moral teaching little if at all inferior" to that contained in the Bible.² Other causes of alarm were found in the following statements made by Dods:

The Bible has not done its work until it takes us past itself, and makes us independent of it.³

I do not believe what Paul says because I first believe him to be inspired; but I believe him to be inspired because he brings light to my spirit which can only have proceeded from God.⁴

But the main criticism was directed against his view of inspiration, especially his references to "errors and imperfections."⁵ It was

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1. Ibid., p. 3.
 2. Minute Book, pp. 153-4; Free Presbytery of Glasgow, Report of the Committee Dealing with the Dods Case, pp. 4-7; James Smith, Prof. Smith on the Bible and Dr. Marcus Dods on Inspiration, (Edinburgh: John Greig & Son, 1877), p. 47; Robert Bremner, Is the Bible Infallible? pp. 4, 15; William Mitchell, Criticism of Dr. Marcus Dods' Sermon, (Glasgow, 1877), pp. 10-11; William Scrymgeour, The Case of Dr. Marcus Dods Correctly Stated, p. 32; Hugh Martin, Letters to Marcus Dods (London: J. Nisbet & Co., 1877) pp. 16-17, 35-36; Stevenson Smith, A Study of Scripture Inspiration, (Edinburgh, Maclaren & Macniven, 1877), pp. 1, 14, 15.
 3. Dods, Revelation and Inspiration, p. 26.
 4. Ibid., p. 25.
 5. Ibid., p. 18.

obvious, Bremner felt, that Dods' views on inspiration were "contrary to the Word of God, to the Confession of Faith, to the doctrine hitherto held and professed, and universally understood to be taught, in the Free Church...."¹ To substantiate this charge Bremner continued with the following line of reasoning:

As I understand it, the doctrine of Scripture is, that the writers of the Bible not only had the whole of what they have written supernaturally made known to them by God, or were specially directed by Him to the selection of it; but that they were all specially and miraculously qualified and enabled by Him to record, with infallible accuracy, what was thus supernaturally revealed to them; that they were completely preserved from errors and mistakes, not only in regard to the doctrines they declared, but also in regard to the facts and incidents they recorded; and that, as the result of this, the Bible is, from beginning to end, a record of infallible truth and divine authority...

In this sermon [of Dods'], however, it is denied that the writers of the Bible were thus supernaturally inspired; and maintained that the Holy Scriptures, as originally written, contained numerous errors and mistakes, and so are not possessed of absolute infallibility.²

At the conclusion of Bremner's speech, Dr. J. Adam of Glasgow, rose to submit a counter motion, asking for the appointment of a committee to consider whether the Presbytery was called to take any action with reference to Dods' views as contained in his sermon, and if so, of what nature.³ In his introductory remarks Dr. Adam told Presbytery that when Dods' sermon appeared, it caused him great anxiety and regret, for he felt that the views which Dods there stated were of a kind well fitted to startle many.

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1. Robert Bremner, Is the Bible Infallible?, p. 5. At the General Assembly of 1878 he termed Dods' view of inspiration as a worthless German counterfeit which did not deserve the name "inspiration". Proceedings and Debates, General Assembly of Free Church of Scotland 1878, p. 230.
 2. Ibid., p. 6.
 3. Minute Book, pp. 126-7.

Unlike Bremner, he did not for a moment imagine that Dods intended to call in question the great fact and truth of divine revelation and inspiration, but he thought Dods was perhaps to blame in advocating a particular theory of inspiration. He felt that the statements which would "wound many tender and susceptible hearts" might have been omitted as not necessary for the support of Dods' theory.¹ Furthermore, he thought there was "something painful in the time that Dods took for issuing these opinions to the world." Their Church had been placed in serious difficulty by the case of William Robertson Smith which was agitating the minds of the ministry and eldership and he thought that it required some very strong reason for Dods at that very juncture to present such views to the Church with all the agitation that they were certain to occasion.² Then, in contrast to Bremner's interpretation of inspiration, Dr. Adam reminded Presbytery that while the Confession of Faith was very emphatic as to the fact of inspiration, it did not lay down any theory as to the mode or manner of that inspiration. Therefore, he felt that it would be an exceedingly difficult matter for Presbytery to construct a libel and establish any heresy charge in connection with the language of the Confession on the subject. He believed that they were more likely to exercise an influence for good, and more likely to correct dangerous tendencies by using a cautious, private, brotherly course than by rushing at a process and bringing

1. The Daily Review, September 6, 1877.

2. At this point he digressed to say that it was well known how he had displayed his confidence in Dods by laboring to secure his appointment to a professorship in opposition to Dods' own wishes.

matters before a Church court to deal with them.¹ He looked upon Bremner's notion as the first step of an intended judicial process, the first step towards a libel, and this, he contended, was an exceedingly objectionable course.² He concluded by saying that his motion, calling for a committee to determine the question whether Presbytery had any duty to discharge, was "the safest and wisest for the Presbytery to adopt."³

Just before the vote was taken, Bremner informed Presbytery that if his motion lost, he had still the right to appeal to a higher court. When the vote was taken, forty-six voted for Dr. Adam's motion and thirty voted for the motion submitted by Bremner. A committee was then appointed with Dr. Adam as convener.⁴

Dods had intended to make an explanatory statement on the floor of Presbytery, but the proceedings terminated more abruptly than he anticipated. Therefore, the following day he sent his statement to the newspapers in the form of a letter to the editor.

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1. He gave two reasons for desiring that the matter might never have been brought before Presbytery in the first place. First, he held that whatever errors Dods might have been guilty of in the sermon, he was at heart loyal to the Word of God. Secondly, he thought it a very serious thing in any way to weaken the influence that Dods exerted as a minister, especially since many of the rising young men of Glasgow looked on Dods' teaching as most profitable to them.
 2. While refusing to enter into criticism of the views submitted by Bremner with regard to the sermon, Dr. Adam emphatically stated that Bremner's "whole criticism was forced and extreme." Principal Douglas, who seconded Dr. Adam's motion, also maintained that Bremner had misapprehended Dods' sermon.
 3. The Daily Review, September 6, 1877.
 4. Minute Book, p. 127.

This letter, published on September 7th, expressed his concern over the impression which the public mind might receive from the extraordinary misrepresentation of his opinions made by Bremner. He wished to deny emphatically that he "had ever held or intended to teach any one of the opinions imputed" to him by Bremner, "save only that here and there in the historical books of Scripture there occurred certain inaccuracies which in no degree militate against its being a true and Divine revelation."¹

Subsequently, a letter from Bremner to the editor appeared in which he revealed that Dods had spoken to him at the close of the proceedings of Presbytery, making the same emphatic denial. He added that in this conversation at the Presbytery House Dods also told him, "I do not accuse you of conscious dishonesty, but, if after this distinct disclaimer on my part, you ever presume to say that I hold, or intended to teach such opinions, you will say what is untrue."² Bremner maintained that even though Dods disclaimed certain opinions, it did not follow that they were not contained in the sermon and the preface.

But the most provocative newspaper item was the editorial in The Scotsman which appeared on the same day as Dods' letter. It began with these words, "The Dods heresy case is at last under weigh."³ The writer of the editorial predicted that the case

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1. The Scotsman, September 7, 1877; The Daily Review, September 7, 1877.
 2. The Daily Review, September 8, 1877.
 3. Editorial, The Scotsman, September 7, 1877.

would expand into dimensions equal to those of the Fergus Ferguson and W. Robertson Smith prosecutions. "The prospect thus opened up for the public," continued the writer, "is a very serious one:"

To have three extensive processes of heresy going on at once, one or other of them breaking out somewhere every fortnight or three weeks, is really too bad. Things might surely have been arranged better, and one could wish that the Free Presbytery of Glasgow had only been sensible enough to follow the example of those long-suffering bodies, the U.P. Presbyteries of Greenock and Dundee, in their ways of dealing with the Revs. David Macrae and George Gilfillan respectively. They simply refuse to take any notice, good or evil, of the statements of those bold and critical brethren, and the consequence is that the latter will, to all appearance, in the end become powerful for "mischief" only among the particular flocks exposed to their administrations.

After setting forth at length the difficulties facing Dods' supporters, the editorial concluded:

But even although Dr. Dods' friends in the Presbytery of Glasgow should successfully surmount these difficulties, it must not be assumed that the course is clear for his acquittal. The experience of last General Assembly in the Robertson Smith case makes it only too plain that waiters on Providence abound in sacred as well as in secular society, and Dr. Dods may well enough find himself deserted in his direst need by some of his most influential friends, if there should be signs of the popular current going against him. A much surer inference, from the present state of the case, is that the number of real, if secret, sympathisers with the views of Dr. Dods is much greater than meets the eye, or the ear. This incessant breaking out of heresy, in spite of all the attempts to keep it down by terroristic repression, is a sure proof that a vast fermentation of thought is going on beneath what seems to be a placid expanse of orthodox acquiescence. The human mind is the same everywhere, and what has been found to be inevitable on the Continent will hardly be made impossible here. Would not freedom of expression, even at the risk of error, be a more wholesome thing than this system of endless prosecution, with the certainty of much insincerity and no great security of truth?¹

On the tenth of October, the committee of which Dr. Adam was convener arrived at the following conclusions: that the sermon

1. Ibid.

was open to grave objection; that it was fragmentary and immature; that Dods would do well not to carry the publication of it any further; and that Presbytery was not called on to institute any process or to take any further action in the matter.¹ When the Committee's Report was read at the next regular meeting of Presbytery on November 7th, Dr. Adam said he regretted very much to have to add that it was by no means a unanimous report. However, he pointed out that of the committee of thirty-three members the dissentients did not number anything like one-half. After various proposals were made regarding the adoption of the report, considerable feeling was displayed in the discussion which followed. Ultimately, it was resolved that the consideration of the report should be deferred until a special meeting of Presbytery on November 27, 1877.

Special Meetings of Presbytery.

The Free Presbytery of Glasgow met for five hours on November 27th in special session to consider the report of the committee. Dr. Adam moved the adoption of the report.² Bremner proposed a

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1. Minute Book, p. 147. Included in the committee's report was a letter from Dods in which he reaffirmed his belief in the divine supernatural inspiration of the Scriptures and his conviction that the inaccuracies of Scripture in no way affected the authority and sufficiency of the Scriptures as an infallible revealed rule of faith and life. Furthermore, Dods admitted that his sermon needed revision: "On page 22 of my sermon I have said that inspiration does not impart any superhuman power of knowledge. This expression is much too broad and sweeping, and I would have withdrawn it long since; but this is one of the evils which ecclesiastical procedure entails, that no alteration can be made on a document to which the attention of the Church has been turned. All that I could do in the circumstances I did: I wrote a preface by which I desire that the sermon be interpreted." Committee Report, p. 10.
 2. Minute Book, Free Presbytery of Glasgow, p. 153. In supporting the motion Dr. Adam disclosed that he personally was no advocate

motion condemning the views held by Dods, censuring the publication of them, enjoining the author to withdraw them from the notice of the public, and appointing a committee to confer with him.¹ Another motion was proposed by Dr. Andrew Bonar to the effect that Presbytery receive the report but disapprove of the sermon and preface, and intimate to the author that they regard it as his duty not to carry the publication any further.² The Presbytery, after discussing these and other motions, agreed to adjourn until November 29th for further discussion, and for the final vote.

Professor A.B. Bruce opened the proceedings of the adjourned meeting with a long and able speech in support of Dr. Adam's motion. He began by saying that he had not shared the anxiety of some in

of the same theory of inspiration as appeared in Dods' sermon but while he "might hold a stricter view of inspiration, and desired all others to do the same", he was not entitled to enforce his view on all his brethren. He saw nothing in the standards which bound or even permitted him to cast out of the Church, or launch its censures against the man who honestly adopted the theory in question, if he did so within due limits. He reminded them that what they might hold and what they might enforce were very different things, and to confound them would be very disastrous.

Mr. Isdale, who seconded Dr. Adam's motion, greatly clarified matters when he called attention to the fact that out of a large committee of more than thirty members, there were only five who committed themselves to the position that the teaching of Dods in the sermon was contrary to the standards of the Church. "If the teaching of Dr. Dods in that sermon was not condemned by the standards of the Church, then it clearly followed that Dr. Dods was entitled to hold these opinions, and entitled also to take his own way of expounding that opinion." Mr. Isdale observed that the report held Dods largely responsible for awakening anxiety and panic through the publication of this sermon; on the other hand he believed that this anxiety and panic had been very much aggravated and was being kept up by the misrepresentations to which Dods' sermon had been subjected. The Daily Review, Nov. 28, 1877.

1. Minute Book, pp. 153-4.
2. Minute Book, pp. 154-5.

regard to the sermon of Dr. Dods.¹ "I hold," said Bruce, "that a man is at liberty to say not only that there may be, but that there are, such things in Scripture as Dr. Dods alleges; for, of course, it is mockery of liberty to tell us, as some told us in the committee, you may hold that there may be such defects, but you dare not say there are." Bruce used this occasion to propound modern critical views in support of Dods' sermon and also to clarify a certain phrase in the Westminster Confession of Faith. He believed that the authors of the Confession used the phrase "entire perfection" to mean that "the Scripture is entirely perfect for the ends for which it was given--to show us the way to salvation, and to fit the man of God for every good work." It would be "a dangerous thing to assert that perfection in any stricter sense is essential to the claims of Scripture to be the Word of God. If we say that the Bible cannot be God's Word, or that it cannot serve the end God gave it for unless it be absolutely free from error, then we virtually assert that we have not a sufficient guide and rule of faith and practice now;" for the Bible has many minor errors due to copyists and other causes.²

After Prof. Bruce's speech, the motions of Bremner and Bonar

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1. His actual words were: "I regarded Dr. Dods as a man above suspicion as to orthodoxy, and therefore I did not read the sermon as one expecting to find in it all manner of heresies. I can easily imagine how a person, coming to the sermon with a previously formed impression that Dr. Dods was a man of questionable soundness, might find in it not a little which appeared to justify his suspicion. In such a state of mind we are very apt to find what we bring." The Daily Review, November 30, 1877.
 2. The Daily Review, November 30, 1877.

were withdrawn in favor of a new motion submitted by Mr. Robert Howie which asked the Presbytery to disapprove the committee's report; to disapprove and censure, as contrary to the Word of God and the standards and teaching of the Church, the views set forth in Dods' sermon and preface regarding inspiration and the infallibility of the Bible; to instruct the author not to carry the publication any further; and to appoint a committee to confer with him in regard to the views in question.¹

Men other than Bruce were keenly aware of the changing times and the need to make allowances for such views as those proposed by Dods. One of the more broad-minded members of Glasgow Presbytery was Mr. William Scrymgeour who concluded his speech in the following manner:

This trial before the Presbytery is at present being looked upon with intense anxiety by many of the ministers of this Free Church, and by many of the younger ministers. Some of these men are regarded as the very flower and pride of the church, men who by their piety and evangelistic zeal and learning are not to be exceeded by any similar body of men to be found in any other Church in this land--these men are looking on this trial with intensest interest and anxiety, and if this Presbytery should say that it is inconsistent with the position of minister or office bearer in this Church to hold such views, then the question presented itself to their minds whether they were entitled any longer to remain in the ministry.²

If Dods' views were condemned, then he felt for his part that all was over with the Free Church, and that she would shrivel up into one of the narrowest of sects.

The speech by Professor T.M. Lindsay, Professor of Christian

1. Minute Book, p. 156.

2. The Daily Review, November 30, 1877.

Ethics and Church History in the Free Church College, Glasgow, and a member of Dods' congregation, also displayed a more liberal view. Speaking in favor of Dr. Adam's motion, he, with effective force, went straight to the heart of the matter. The real question at issue, he perceived, was whether the Confession "tolerates" Dods' views.

I think that it is a somewhat striking fact that neither Mr. Bremmer, nor any who have taken his side, have quoted to us the opening sentence of the chapter in the Confession of Faith in which this whole subject is discussed, and yet that opening sentence must rule all the rest.¹

In particular he drew attention to the Confession's phrase "commit the same wholly into writing."² With keen insight he declared that what is committed wholly into writing is the knowledge of God and His will which is necessary unto salvation. "This distinction between knowledge necessary to our salvation, which we can only get by His own revelation and declaration, is carefully distinguished from other knowledge; and this distinction carefully placed at the head of the chapter must rule our interpretation of all the other phrases."³

When the vote was taken, fifty-four favored Dr. Adam's motion and fifty-one voted for Howie's motion. Thus, by the slim majority of three votes Presbytery made its decision to take no further action.⁴

Unfortunately, the members of the minority were not ready to

1. The Daily Review, November 30, 1877.

2. Ibid. See The Confession of Faith (Edinburgh: Johnstone, Hunter, & Co., 1877) p. 17.

3. Ibid.

4. Minute Book, p. 156.

accept the will of the Presbytery. In order to keep the issue alive they dissented from the resolution of Presbytery and began making arrangements to have the matter brought before the Synod of Glasgow and Ayr.¹ To them, this was clearly one of the most serious situations which the Free Church had ever faced; a situation which, if not stopped, would subvert the faith of many.² Therefore, they felt that no effort should be spared in the attempt to prohibit the publication of such views as those found in Dods' sermon.

Throughout the entire proceedings Dods never spoke on the floor of Presbytery, nor was he present at the special meeting of November 29th when the final vote was taken. The only time he addressed Presbytery in person was on December 5, 1877, when the ordinary monthly meeting of Glasgow Free Presbytery was held. The statement which he read at that time said:

I desire that it may be put upon the record of the Presbytery that I withdrew my sermon on the distinct understanding that a majority of the Presbytery has found that the views expressed in my sermon and preface are to be tolerated within the Church and are not condemned by the Confession. I am myself of opinion that the views I have expressed are consistent with the Confession, and I withdraw it only in deference to the Presbytery's opinion that the publication of these views has been ill-advised in form and in time.³

When, after some discussion, it was agreed to enter this statement into the minutes, the major victory was given to Dods, because Presbytery thereby officially and for the first time, pronounced his views acceptable and in harmony with the Westminster Confession

1. Ibid., pp. 156 and 159.

2. Proceedings and Debates, General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland, 1878, p. 230.

3. Minute Book, p. 159.

of Faith. Dods' action in this instance revealed the wise way in which he could turn an adverse situation into an occasion for advancing the cause of truth.

It was only afterwards that Dods' critics realized the full significance of this statement which had been incorporated into the minutes of Glasgow Presbytery. Thereupon, they earnestly endeavored, first at the meeting of Synod and then at the General Assembly, to have this statement purged from the records. In this effort, they were never successful.

The Free Synod of Glasgow and Ayr.

The Free Synod of Glasgow and Ayr met April 9, 1878, in the Free Tron Church, Glasgow.¹ Initially, there was discussion as to whether the Synod during its brief sitting could deal properly with the Dods case without having all the papers printed and in the hands of all the members. Many did not see the necessity of having a public discussion of the case because they felt that, regardless of Synod's decision, it would still be brought under the consideration of the whole Church in the General Assembly. Others felt that a compromise motion would satisfy both sides and thereby prevent the issue from going to the General Assembly.²

The composers of the motion decided that in order to satisfy the opposition the motion must criticize Presbytery's judgment as

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1. The Presbytery Hall was too small to accommodate all those who wished to attend.
 2. The defenders of the motion adopted by Synod later explained to the General Assembly that it was their purpose "to get this case honourably settled without bringing it under the notice of this Assembly." Proceedings and Debates, 1878, p. 243.

not going far enough, but in order to make it acceptable to those who had supported Dr. Adam's motion in Presbytery, it must avoid a formal reversal of Presbytery's decision. The motion, in its final form, read as follows:

...that Synod sustain the dissent and complaint in so far as it takes exception to the report approved of by the Presbytery, as not being a full representation of the dangerous character of the views set forth in the sermon...
 (2) the Synod take this opportunity of affirming...the infallibility and Divine authority of the Holy Scriptures,
 (3) further, having learned from the bar that the sermon is now withdrawn, the Synod is of opinion that the case should here take end.¹

When the compromise motion was adopted by a vote of thirty-one to twenty-one the framers of the motion thought that their purpose of preventing the case from reaching the General Assembly had been accomplished, but they underestimated the determination of that segment of Glasgow Presbytery who opposed Dods' views. With undaunted persistence twenty-eight members of Synod submitted to the General Assembly their appeal and protest against the judgment of Synod.²

The General Assembly.

The protest and appeal against the judgment of the Synod was submitted to the General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland which began its sittings in the new Public Halls, Glasgow, on Thursday, 23rd May, 1878. For two reasons, this protest received far less consideration than was expected: (1) the Dods Case was

1. Proceedings and Debates, 1878, p. 229.

4. Robert Howie, The State of the Question (Glasgow: Charles Glass & Co., 1878) p. 43. Also The Daily Review, April 23, 1878.

not presented for discussion until Friday, May 31st¹ and (2) three days of the Assembly already had been devoted to the William Robertson Smith Case.²

Mr. Robert Bremner, as the first to speak in support of the protest and appeal, consumed much time reiterating the same objections which he had expressed in the meetings of Presbytery and Synod. He especially emphasized his desire that the Assembly "instead of being satisfied with the so-called withdrawal [of the sermon], will not only prohibit the author from giving further currency...to the views in question but will also...unequivocally declare that such views cannot and will not be tolerated within this Church."³

Dr. Begg, the recognized leader of the ultra-orthodox segment of the Free Church, made the motion in support of the protest and appeal. The significant part of his motion called upon the Assembly to regard the judgment of Synod as defective in so far as it did not explicitly reverse the judgment of the Presbytery, and to enjoin the Presbytery of Glasgow to delete from their record the minute of December 5 in regard to Dods, and to deal with him in regard to his views.⁴

Principal Rainy's speech, which reflected his skill as an ecclesiastical leader, argued that it was part of the "duty and

1. Proceedings and Debates of the General Assembly of The Free Church of Scotland, 1878, pp. 229-253. See p. 245 for Dr. Rainy's speech in which he pointed out that Friday was the "last diet at which this could be taken up, certainly with any full attendance of members."

2. Ibid., p. 245.

3. Ibid., p. 235.

4. Ibid., p. 247.

wisdom" of their Church to avoid being drawn into discussion and decision of the serious questions involved. He reasoned that in the circumstances in which this case had come up, the Assembly could not do justice to the issues which the case had raised.¹ The motion he proposed, therefore, was worded in such a way that the Assembly would not have to enter upon the merits of the case.

When the vote was taken there was an overwhelming majority² in favor of Rainy's motion, which read in part:

Wherefore the General Assembly, considering that they are not in circumstances to enter with advantage on a discussion of the topics which this case appears to involve, and that no substantial interest appears to be imperilled by accepting the decision of the Synod, dismiss the protest and appeal, and declare the sentence of the Synod to be final.³

The significance of the Assembly's finding⁴ was that Glasgow Presbytery's decision of November 29th was never formally reversed nor was Dods' statement deleted from the minute of December 5th.⁵ Dods in his statement had clearly indicated that he regarded the decision of Presbytery as having secured the toleration of his views within the Free Church. In the ensuing months it had become evident that the public at large also interpreted Presbytery's decision in this manner.⁶ By not specifically declaring Dods's

1. Ibid., pp. 243-5.

2. 316 for Rainy's motion. 97 for Begg's motion. See Ibid., p. 252.

3. Ibid., pp. 252-3. This motion was variously interpreted during the 1890 Dods Case. Rainy was compelled to discuss it at some length before the 1890 Assembly. Proceedings and Debates 1890, pp. 111-12.

4. Also the significance of the Synod's judgment.

5. This statement is contained in the Minute Book of Glasgow Presbytery, now deposited in the Register House, Edinburgh. Minute Book, Vol. VI., p. 159.

6. Proceedings and Debates, p. 232.

view of inspiration inconsistent with the Confession, the Assembly did not discourage this interpretation. Furthermore, the fact that the Assembly avoided being drawn into a discussion and decision on the main issue of inspiration meant that, if the issue should come before any future Assembly, the Free Church might then be ready to accept the more liberal views of inspiration. Thus, the judgment of the 1878 General Assembly was a sign of hope to those who like Dods were pursuing the path of reverent, yet fearless investigation in the field of Biblical study.

II. DODS AND THE WILLIAM ROBERTSON SMITH CASE

In order to understand the teaching of Dods in the setting in which it appeared, it is necessary to consider very briefly the William Robertson Smith Case which was contemporaneous with the Dods Case. For this present study it is important to note the similarities between the Smith Case and the Dods Case, but it is more important to understand the differences between the two cases. The reaction of the general public to Smith's article "Bible"¹ was very similar to the feeling aroused over Dods' sermon on "Revelation and Inspiration". Although the basic issues were different, both writings seemed to involve the trustworthiness of the Bible. However, inspiration was never a main issue in the Smith Case. It was primarily in connection with the views of Dods that discussion in the Free Church was carried out on this vital question.

Outline Of The Smith Case.

William Robertson Smith, a brilliant scholar and a man of exceptional talent, was elected to the Chair of Hebrew and Old Testament Literature in Aberdeen Free Church College in 1870. Smith's reputation was responsible for the invitation he received in 1874 from the editors of the ninth edition of the Encyclopaedia Britannica who entrusted to him the main articles in the field of Biblical literature. When his article "Bible" appeared in December, 1875, several of his friends expressed the opinion that the article was a contribution to Biblical scholarship which would prove to be

1. This article appeared in the ninth edition of the Encyclopaedia Britannica.

a welcome relief to many consciences and a valuable service to a living and growing theology. On January 21, 1876, Smith wrote to his mother:

I had a very appreciative and kind note from Whyte about my article "Bible", enclosing a note about it (also very favourable) which he had from Dods.¹

Many people in Scotland, however, were shocked by this article. It was not only written entirely from the point of view of higher criticism, but it also accepted some of criticism's most advanced conclusions. For example, he expressed views about the non-Davidic authorship of all but one or two of the Psalms, as well as views about the function of prophets as preachers to their times rather than predictors of future events. He also ascribed the Synoptic Gospels not to the evangelists whose names they bear but to later non-apostolic tradition. Three additional positions, perhaps the most significant, of the article have been summarized by Fleming:

That the current tradition as to the Mosaic authorship of the entire Pentateuch and other historical books are unreliable, there being not one continuously consistent account but a fusion of several distinct narratives which partly cover the same ground and were combined into unity by later editing.

That the writings of the earlier prophets in the eighth century B.C. preceded in date the codification of the Law, and greatly influenced the method and value of the history.

That Deuteronomy is a prophetic legislative programme, the aim of the author not being to propound another law but to expand and develop Mosaic principles under the name of the Lawgiver, in relation to new needs.²

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1. John Sutherland and George Chrystal, The Life of William Robertson Smith, (London: Adam and Charles Black, 1912) p. 175.
 2. J.R. Fleming, A History of the Church in Scotland 1876-1929 (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1933), p. 10.

"It is almost impossible for persons in the present day," wrote Simpson in 1909, "to realise the shock with which the mass of the Free Church read all this from one of her own accredited teachers."¹ They were startled by his expressions of critical views commonly associated with German Rationalism.² Many people, both within and without the Free Church, regarded the article as a menace, and their feelings soon found public expression in the form of numerous pamphlets, articles, letters to the editor, etc. In turn, this flood of printed matter awakened in other minds a sincere concern for the best interests of the faith. Smith's biographers record that by 1876 "there was growing agitation, if not already panic, in high places."³

In May, 1876, the College Committee of the Free Church took the matter under consideration and it was not until January, 1877, that their report was completed and made public. The Committee reported that they did not find sufficient ground to support a process for heresy but they expressed the opinion that the article "Bible" "is of a dangerous and unsettling tendency."⁴

At the General Assembly of 1877, Smith expressed the opinion that his teaching could not be purged of suspicion except by a regular judicial process. He intimated that at the next meeting of Aberdeen Presbytery, he would ask that all the charges against him be reduced to the form of a libel, a method by which charges had to be explicitly stated and either proved or disproved by exact

1. Patrick Carnegie Simpson, The Life of Principal Rainy, (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1909) Vol. I, p. 311.

2. Ibid., p. 307.

3. Black and Chrystal, op. cit., p. 201.

4. Ibid., p. 209.

reference to the Church's standards.¹ The first libel was eventually reduced to one count dealing with Smith's view of the authorship and purpose of Deuteronomy, and this was made almost the sole ground of indictment. The question of Biblical inerrancy was not made a main charge in the Smith Case.² From the outset Smith declared his acceptance of the Bible as the one sufficient and authoritative record of Divine revelation, and his adherence to the doctrine of its inspiration as set forth in the Westminster Confession of Faith.³

Smith unwittingly prevented a speedy termination of his case by insisting that the charges against him be reduced to a libel. It soon became apparent that this "cumbersome and scholastic procedure was utterly out of date and only caused provoking delay in bringing the matter to a head."⁴ Thus, the case dragged on and the General Assembly was forced to deal with it in four successive years.⁵

The Assembly of 1880, by a margin of seven votes, resolved to end the proceedings and to restore Smith to his Chair. This triumph was short-lived, however, for only ten days after the Assembly adjourned, a new and equally offensive Encyclopaedia article appeared by Smith on "Hebrew Language and Literature."⁶

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1. The first libel was completed in 1878, the year that the Dods Case came before the General Assembly.
 2. Fleming, op. cit., p. 14.
 3. Simpson, op. cit., p. 333.
 4. Fleming, op. cit., p. 11.
 5. 1878, 1879, 1880, 1881.
 6. In this article Smith for the first time definitely accepted the Graf-Wellhausen critical position. Robert Mackintosh, Principal Rainy (London: Andrew Melrose, 1907) p. 61.

This unexpected publication shifted public sentiment away from Smith. His explanation that the article had been in the press long before the Assembly, did not appease many who now become convinced that the continuance of Smith in his Chair would be injurious to the peace and unity of the Church. This was the decision declared by a decisive vote of 423 to 245 in the Assembly of 1881.

This act of administrative necessity, sacrificing an individual for the sake of the Church, had originally been the idea of Principal Rainy. Many who refused to vote for Rainy's policy in 1880 when it was first advocated, accepted it in 1881 as the only expedient procedure. The irritation throughout the Church at Smith's "violation of what was regarded as a truce if not a final settlement was more than sufficient...to rally the opposition to united and drastic action under Rainy's leadership."¹

Dods' Role In This Phase of the Struggle for Freedom of Critical Inquiry.

During the early period of intense agitation over the Robertson Smith Case, Smith himself attached much more importance to the cordial approval and support of his friends, and especially of Whyte, Dods, and Macgregor (Professor of Dogmatic Theology), than to the scathing remarks of his critics. All three men were personally very sympathetic and helpful to Smith throughout the troubled

1. Fleming, op. cit., p. 13.

years which followed.¹ The type of support which Dods offered is reflected in the following incident. Smith published a letter in the Daily Review in June of 1875 in which he answered the attacks of a bitter and insulting pamphlet. Dods wrote him expressing approval, although it was known that Principal Rainy strongly disapproved of this procedure.²

For two obvious reasons Dods did not assume leadership of the pro-Smith side of this controversy.³ The fact that his own name had come before the Assembly of 1878 in an unfavorable light meant that his outspoken leadership might have done Smith's cause more harm than good. Secondly, Dods had always been "a great stranger to ecclesiastical courts".⁴ It was against his reserved nature to take part in debate unless it was absolutely necessary. Therefore, the defence of Smith's cause within the various church courts was primarily undertaken by three Glasgow professors: A.B. Bruce, J.S. Candlish, and T.M. Lindsay; and Professor Salmond of Aberdeen. These four professors along with

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1. None of the three was a thorough-going supporter in the particular theories which came into prominence at this time, such as the Graf-Wellhausen theory. At the 1881 Assembly Dods said that he thought Smith's views with regard to the Deuteronomic code were demonstrably false in some particulars, and almost as indefensible as the old traditional views. But he thought that while Smith had made mistakes as a scientific investigator, he had nevertheless rendered most valuable services to the Church. Proceedings and Debates, General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland, 1881, p. 173.
 2. Black and Chrystal, op. cit., pp. 194-5.
 3. Simpson uses the terms pro-Smith side, the "Smithites", the "Smith party", op. cit., pp. 367, 369, 372, 3. Black and Chrystal op. cit., use the term "the progressive party". G.F. Barbour, The Life of Alexander Whyte, p. 212, speaks of the "Robertson Smith party."
 4. See Simpson, op. cit., p. 394.

Dods and Whyte were the chief protagonists for freedom of critical inquiry. They spent many long and anxious hours consulting together in Whyte's study, which had become "a kind of committee-room for the Robertson Smith party."¹

Dods regarded his part in the Smith controversy as one of quietly educating the people to understand the issues involved and thereby to minimize the fear and panic which arose in many minds over the new ideas. During the winter of 1881, when Smith was barred from teaching his classes in Aberdeen, Dods was one of those who took the lead in arranging a series of public lectures to be delivered by Smith. In Glasgow the course of "expository lectures on criticism" was delivered in Renfield Free Church,² and was attended by hundreds.³ The lectures were later published under the title, The Old Testament in the Jewish Church, which Rainy's biographer characterized as an "enlightening and thoroughly believing book."⁴

Another way in which Dods quietly went about his task of informing the people of the dangers of blind adherence to tradition is reflected in a sermon which he preached three times in the year 1881, the final year of the Smith Case.⁵ This sermon, "Our Lord's

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1. G.F. Barbour, The Life of Alexander Whyte (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1923) p. 212.
 2. Simpson, op. cit., p. 386. This was Dods' church for twenty-five years.
 3. The first lecture was delivered twice in Glasgow on Monday, January 10, 1881, to about 500 people in the afternoon and 700 in the evening. Smith wrote that both audiences were "thoroughly attentive and appreciative." Black and Chrystal, op. cit., p. 410. Later in the year he wrote: "My lectures yesterday in Glasgow were as full as ever, perhaps fuller--in spite of the dreadful weather. The interest seems to be increasing." Ibid., p. 411.
 4. Simpson, Ibid., p. 387.
 5. This sermon was preached once to his own congregation and twice to other churches in Glasgow.

Teaching on Hand-Washing," included the following paragraph:

Indeed, it is only too notorious that in all ages there are men who escape the common duties of life under guise of greater religiousness than other men. Among ourselves it is not an unknown thing for men to cherish feelings of hatred and to express malice in word and deed towards persons who think differentially from themselves: and this they do without any self-reproach or conscious wickedness because they suppose themselves to be zealous in defence of religious truth. In defending some trifle which hangs to the mere skirt of religion they do not scruple to transgress the broad laws of justice, truth, and charity which form its life. So that if you wish to see unscrupulous malice, persistent vindictiveness, virulent intolerance in their worst forms you may seek them among the defenders of traditional religion--among that class, in fact, which represents the Pharisees of our Lord's time. It cannot have escaped the observation of anyone that no vice was more frequently and severely condemned by our Lord than this of breaking fundamental moral laws under pretence of defending religion. So unsparing is He in his invective against this and so often does He return to the subject that we are sometimes tempted to think this part of His teaching overdone and tedious, or at any rate inapplicable to our day. But when one sees the damage done to religion by such persons and also the great difficulty of convincing them of their error, no denunciation seems too strong or too often repeated.¹

Those who heard this sermon could easily discern the similarity between the unfortunate results of narrow orthodoxy in Jesus' day and the results of narrow orthodoxy in their own day.

At the General Assembly of 1881 Dods intervened publicly in the Smith Case for the first and last time. He appealed to the Assembly for delay and suspension of judgment before an irretrievable step was taken.² His memorable speech also called for the Assembly to deal directly with the heresy and not merely with the heretic. "I should like very much to have seen how some Greek-speaking Dr.

1. Dods, Sermon MS. "Our Lord's Teaching on Hand-Washing," pp. 6-7.

2. This speech was considered the feature of the Assembly. Simpson referred to it as "a speech of exceptional strength." Simpson, op. cit., p. 394. Also Glasgow Herald, April 27, 1909. Despite the fact that the speech was a severe criticism and condemnation of Rainy's policy, Rainy said in private that it was "the finest thing I ever heard in my life." Mackintosh, op. cit., p. 77.

Rainy would have been received by the Council of Nice, let us say, if he had professed to deal with the heretic, but not with the heresy." In closing he gave a brilliant illustration from Euripides of the mother who, in religious excitement, destroyed her child. And then he said:

...it has been my dread all through this case that any element of religious excitement should enter into our action, and that we might have one day to repent in the same anguish and bitterness of spirit as that mother had to repent, that we have destroyed one of the very worthiest of our sons.¹

After the overwhelming defeat of Smith's supporters in the 1881 Assembly, no time was lost by the minority in organizing a protest. Three hundred ministers, elders, and others met together for breakfast at the Freemasons Hall, George Street, Edinburgh, on Saturday, May 28th. Dods was one of several speakers who addressed the gathering. The men who met on this occasion signed a protest which affirmed that, despite the action of the Assembly, all Free Church ministers and office-bearers were at liberty to pursue the critical questions raised, and they pledged themselves to do their utmost to protect any men who carried on such studies legitimately.² Professor Bruce on this occasion affirmed "we should feel as men who are convinced that we have right on our side, and that the candid and honest feeling of the community in general will sooner or later come over to our side."³ During the years which followed, no man in Scotland did more than Marcus Dods to bring about this change in the "feeling of the community".

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1. Proceedings and Debates of the General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland, 1881, pp. 172-5.
 2. Black and Chrystal, op. cit., p. 450.
 3. Ibid., p. 448.

III. THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF 1889 AND THE ELECTION OF DODS AS A PROFESSOR

Six weeks before the Free Church of Scotland General Assembly of 1889, the death occurred of Dr. George Smeaton, Professor of New Testament Exegesis in the New College, Edinburgh. When the vacancy of the Chair was announced, the thoughts of many turned naturally to Marcus Dods. Dr. Rainy who was in Australia at the time telegraphed his ecclesiastical confidants, "The man in our Church who would give an impulse to Biblical studies and who would come among the students with unequalled authority would be Dods."¹ However, many of Dods' admirers, including Rainy, doubted that he would receive the appointment because of the suspicion of heresy which still hovered over him. It had been only eleven years since the Dods Case had come before the Assembly and only eight years since Dods had taken a conspicuous role in the closing moments of the Robertson Smith Case. Moreover, within the year 1888 he had received sharp criticism for remarks made in an address before the Pan-Presbyterian Council in London.² On this occasion his advanced views on the nature of the Bible were again brought into sharp focus. The public mind was well informed about Dods' views; he had sought never to hide them under ambiguous

1. Simpson, op. cit., Vol. II, p. 109.

2. This council, consisting of delegates from all over the world, was addressed by Dods on July 5, 1888. His speech was subsequently published in a volume entitled Alliance of the Reformed Churches Holding the Presbyterian System. Minutes and Proceedings of the Fourth General Council, London, 1888. Edited by William G. Blaikie. The Expositor also published his speech. "How Far is the Church Responsible for the Present Scepticism?", The Expositor, 8:297-306, 1888.

language nor to refrain from speaking them whenever he felt they might serve an apologetic purpose.¹

On Tuesday, May 28, at a quarter-past one o'clock, and in a densely crowded house, the General Assembly of 1889 took up the question of electing a successor to Professor Smeaton. The Report of the Committee on Election of Professors showed that five Synods and sixty-one Presbyteries had sent up recommendations, covering nineteen names.² Dods was recommended by five Synods and forty-three Presbyteries.³ This was significant, for the names had been sent up within a very short time and with "great spontaneity" by the Church.⁴

Almost before discussion began, a motion was read in the name of Dr. Scott, Aberlour, to the effect that the name of Dr. Dods should not be submitted to a vote of the House. Dr. Scott explained to the Assembly that he protested against Dods' name being submitted on the grounds which he had taken in the Smith Case. But "having satisfied his conscience," he, in the end, agreed to withdraw his motion.⁵ This curious incident was

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1. The Aberdeen Evening Gazette made the comment, "A notable feature in regard to his utterances was that those which are most daring were made in the most public way and submitted to the criticism of the world. Another thing is that he withdrew none of them." Article on Marcus Dods, April, 26, 1909.
 2. Sixteen out of the nineteen were ministers of the Free Church.
 3. The only Synod which did not nominate him was his own Synod of Glasgow and Ayr. They undoubtedly would have endorsed him but their last meeting for the year had been held prior to the announcement of the vacancy.
 4. Proceedings and Debates of the General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland, 1889, p. 75.
 5. Ibid., pp. 73-4.

indicative of the spirit of suspicion and distrust with which Dods was regarded by many who sat in this Assembly.

Discussion first centered on the question of the advisability of seeking to fill at the moment a vacancy which had occurred so recently. The importance of the Church being of one mind in the matter of election was mentioned in several speeches which urged delay. Opposite views were expressed by others who felt that "the excitement and tension in connection with the election were such that it would be for the best interests of the Church" to proceed at once.¹

What was the explanation for the excitement and tension which existed on this occasion? More than one Assembly speaker² clearly expressed the view that "the question at issue was the Inspiration of the Bible."³ A similar view of the significance of the election was also taken by the contemporary press.⁴ Dods, whose name had been mentioned most frequently for the vacant Chair, was known to be "one of the most outspoken representatives of critical liberalism who had frankly disavowed the idea of the inerrancy of Scripture and advocated the broader view of inspiration."⁵ This election, therefore, evoked widespread public attention and intense feelings within the Assembly.

After a majority had declared in favor of going on with the election Mr. Walter Ross Taylor of Glasgow rose to propose that

1. Ibid., p. 75.

2. Ibid., pp. 75, 80, 86, 87.

3. Ibid., p. 75.

4. Simpson, op. cit., Vol. II, p. 110.

5. Ibid.

Dods be appointed to the Chair of New Testament Exegesis in the New College. His motion was received with loud applause. Mr. Taylor hesitated to speak at any length upon Dods' eminent qualifications, because, he explained, "already Dr. Dods' name was a household word throughout the Free Church, and far beyond it." He supposed that there was not "a minister of that Church or an educated layman who had not with delight sat at his feet and received instruction and stimulus from his luminous and masterly expositions."¹ He reminded the Assembly that on two previous occasions the eyes of the Church had turned instinctively to Dods as a man who ought to be in a professor's chair.² There existed throughout the Church, reported Mr. Taylor, a strong abiding, ineradicable conviction that Dods was a born teacher of students. The speaker expressed the belief that, were it not for the doubts which existed in some minds as to Dods' soundness in the faith, his eminent fitness would be on all sides acknowledged, and his appointment in all probability would be unanimous. Taylor felt bound, therefore, to direct the attention of the Assembly to the matter of Dods' orthodoxy. He attempted to show from Dods' own

1. Proceedings and Debates 1889, pp. 76-81.

2. In 1868 the Free Presbytery of Glasgow endorsed him for a vacant Chair of Theology in New College, but he afterwards magnanimously withdrew his name in favor of the candidature of a friend. Again in 1875 he was nominated for the vacant Chair of Divinity in Glasgow Free Church College. P. Carnegie Simpson has written that "Dods would, in all probability, have been appointed if he had not written 'humbly but decidedly' expression the opinion that the Church would act wisely in keeping him where he was." The British Monthly, 4:187 March 1904. Cf. British Weekly, May 6, 1909 (letter by J. Cunningham); Biblical World, 7:249; Glasgow Herald, April 27, 1909; Dundee Advertiser, April 21, 1909; Daily Review, September 6, 1877 (Dr. Adam's speech); Proceedings and Debates, 1889, p. 76.

published statements that he explicitly believed in the Scriptures as the authoritative records of the revelation which God has made. He frankly indicated, however, that there was a distinct difference between Dods and some members of the Assembly in regard to "literal exactness" as a necessary characteristic of an inspired Bible. In conclusion he urged the election of Dods, not for Dods' sake, but for the interest of the Church and for the sake of truth. He urged them to act as men who understood the need of their time, and could distinguish between a true orthodoxy and that which was rigid and dead. He expressed confidence that whatever uneasiness there might be in some minds in regard to the proposed appointment, Dods had only to occupy the chair for a few years, and they would see, in the students he sent forth to the Church, proof that they had made a right decision.

Elder A.R. Simpson,² who seconded the motion proposing Dods' name, made an even more compelling speech in his behalf. With touches of personal reminiscence and humor, he won the attention of the crowded house. There were three qualities, he told the Assembly, which he desired in the man who would fill the vacant chair. First, he was anxious that the Church's youth should come under the influence of a man of sound spirituality. Then he sought "a man of sound morality who will not pass off as his own what he has borrowed from others, nor put off his students with anything that he has not passed through the crucible of his own experience." And, thirdly, we wanted the new professor to be a man of large

1. Proceedings and Debates, 1889, pp. 76-81.

2. Simpson succeeded his famous uncle, Sir James Young Simpson, the discoverer of chloroform, as Professor of Midwifery in Edinburgh University's Medical Department.

grasp and culture, "such as the students could respect and honour." In Dods he saw such a man, beyond all "question the man who stands out as the most capable guide of youth."¹

Dr. Salmond, who for 13 years had been Professor of Systematic Theology and Exegesis of the New Testament Epistles in Aberdeen College, was nominated next.² Then came the nomination of Rev. Alexander Cusin, Lady Glenorchy's Church, Edinburgh.³

One of the final speakers⁴ before the vote was taken said the Free Church had reached perhaps the greatest crisis which had occurred since the Disruption. The Church was about to make an appointment to the Professorship of the Exegesis of New Testament at a time when the air of the country and the theological literature "was full of the wildest ideas about inspiration." The Church had been called upon at that critical moment to stand before the whole Christian world, and give out a pronouncement of their opinion upon this matter. He and others believed that Dods' view was definitely not the orthodox views which the Church had held. "Surely the Church had not departed from the desire to teach on the subject of inspiration what Chalmers, Cunningham and Dr. Hodge had been teaching." He would "regret deeply if the Church were to proclaim to the whole of Christendom that they had... appointed a professor who gloried in being broad Church."⁵

When at last the votes were tabulated, the results were announced as follows: Dods--383; Cusin--165; Salmond--115. "To the delight

1. Proceedings and Debates, 1889, pp. 81-83.

2. Ibid., p. 83.

3. Ibid., p. 85.

4. Mr. James Balfour.

5. Ibid., pp. 86-7.

of many and the surprise of all, the result was the triumphant appointment of Dr. Dods, who at the first vote had an absolute majority of more than a hundred over both the other nominees combined."¹

Immediately following the declaration of Dods' appointment to the Chair, a signed statement of dissent was handed to the Clerk to be read before the Assembly. This document listed three reasons for dissent, all pertaining to Dods' view of inspiration. The dissentients were of the opinion that Dods had not heeded the exhortation of the 1878 Assembly to "avoid all just occasion of offence to Christian minds." Especially were they aroused over his recent address to the Pan-Presbyterian Council which "gave great offence to the representatives of various Churches in that Council."²

For the moment, however, the progressive movement in the Free Church, which had been slowly but steadily gaining momentum since the Robertson Smith Case, had won the day.³ Unquestionably this had been a very significant election.⁴ The election did not mean that the Free Church had adopted Dods' views,⁵

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1. Simpson, op. cit., Vol. II, p. 110. See The British Monthly, 4:181, March 1904.
 2. Proceedings and Debates, 1889, p. 88.
 3. Glasgow Herald, April 2, 1909.
 4. One newspaper writer summarized the appointment of Dods as a "sign of the times." Glasgow Herald, April 2, 1909.
 5. Proceedings and Debates, 1890, p. 115. This gives Rainy's interpretation of the significance of the 1889 election. He was in Australia when news came of Dods' election. "It created a great deal of talk, because all the world knew that the last great demonstration of Dr. Dods had been the paper at the Pan-Presbyterian Council." People asked him what it meant when Dods was elected by such a great majority. He told them that it did not mean that the Free Church was prepared to adopt Dods' view but that the Church

but it did mean that she tolerated them and that even in a teacher of her students. This was a notable advance in a Church the majority of which, less than a decade before, had declared that William Robertson Smith must no longer be a professor.¹

Dods was not present at the 1889 Assembly to make an acceptance speech in person. Instead the Clerk read a brief, simply written letter dated Milan, Italy, 21st May, 1889, in which Dods said in part, "I should be greatly obliged by your intimating to the Assembly my acceptance of the post if they see fit to appoint me."²

His first official appearance as a Professor was in November, 1889, when he delivered his inaugural address. He attracted so great an audience that an adjournment had to be made from the College to the Assembly Hall. Thus, his lecture, in which he openly stated his critical views, was read from the very Moderator's desk from which Robertson Smith had been admonished eight years earlier.³

"thought it wisest to entertain what might be said...by honest and believing men, and was not at present disposed to boycott anybody...earnestly dealing with the Word of God."

1. Simpson, loc. cit.
2. Proceedings and Debates, 1889, p. 89. In the spring of 1889 the Renfield Church had held a jubilee service in honor of Dods' twenty-five year ministry there. On this occasion he had been given a check for £1,000 and told to take a six months' holiday on the Continent.
3. The British Monthly, 4:189, March 1904.

IV. THE 1890 DODS CASE

Introduction.

Reference has already been made to the fact that in 1888 Dods read a paper on "How Far Is the Church Responsible for Present Scepticism?" to the Pan-Presbyterian Council.¹ This address, later reprinted in The Expositor, immediately drew from his critics torrents of wrath and denunciation. For a few months after the 1889 Assembly, excitement about the offending address subsided, and it was almost forgotten until Dods again unintentionally drew attention to himself by a sermon he preached on "What is A Christian?" This sermon was preached in St. Giles' Cathedral in connection with the Edinburgh University Gathering, September 29, 1889.²

The considerable section in the Church which had never really acquiesced in Dods' appointment to a Chair, took this opportunity to renew the struggle. A storm of agitation, much more bitter than anything Dods had previously encountered, soon arose against him.³

Public meetings to protest against his views were held in Inverness and elsewhere, and Highland Presbyteries overtured the Assembly on the subject...The Heather was set on fire afresh, and by the time that the Assembly of

1. See pp.

2. Dods, What is a Christian? (Edinburgh: Macniven & Wallace, 1889). This sermon went into many editions. For discussion of the sermon's content see pp. 152-6 of this thesis.

3. Aberdeen Journal, April 27, 1909.

1890 approached, the "Highland host" was in full cry and the alarm of unsound teaching in the Colleges was spread throughout the Church.¹

Implicated with Dods in the 1890 controversy was another professor, Dr. A.B. Bruce of Glasgow College. Because of the eminence of these two men and the popularity of their books throughout the English speaking world, the Dods-Bruce Case received wide-spread publicity in the contemporary press not only in Britain but in Canada and the United States as well.² One Assembly speaker tersely remarked that the eye of the world was upon them "because Dr. Dods had...the ear of the world."³

Professor Bruce himself, writing in later years, described the 1890 situation as a "theological panic...of which the Free Church of Scotland has had fully more than its own share...It was a pretty formidable outburst of well-intended though ill-informed zeal for the truth...The question at issue was the view to be taken of Biblical inspiration, traditional views earnestly held by many at the time coming into sharp collision with modern conceptions as stated plainly by the object of assault."³ It is true that the main question at issue was verbal inspiration but the panic was also precipitated by certain

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1. Simpson, op. cit., Vol. II, p. 111. Also Proceedings and Debates of the General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland, 1890, p. 86. One of the Assembly speakers objected to the way in which Dods' critics had operated, not through the ordinary channels of the church courts, but through "great public meetings outside the Church altogether--in Inverness or in Glasgow-- or in some other large town. And they invited people to these meetings --in order that the gathering might be large--by means of rather inflammatory advertisements." Thus, long before the Dods Case reached the Church Courts "the minds of the people had been excited into such terror that it was no wonder that the gentlemen who roused them were able to ride into that Assembly and shout, 'The Church is on fire'."
 2. Aberdeen Journal, April 27, 1909.
 3. Proceedings and Debates, 1890, p. 109.

statements which Dods had made on the Divinity of Christ, the Atonement, and the Resurrection of Christ.

By 1890, written criticism against Dods' views began to appear in the form of Memorials from Presbyteries and from meetings of office-bearers and members of the Free Church.¹ In January these Memorials, calling attention to certain teaching in the writings of Dods which appeared to be at variance with the Standards of the Church, were laid before the College Committee.² As an initial step in making the necessary inquiries, the College Committee appointed a Sub-Committee to examine all the allegations in question and the passages on which they were founded. The Sub-Committee had to determine whether Dods' views were sound on the following points: what is a Christian, the Divinity of Christ, the atonement, the Resurrection of Christ, and inspiration.

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1. E.g. the Free Presbytery of Greenock considered this motion: "That the Presbytery, viewing with great anxiety and alarm the statements made by Dr. Marcus Dods on the subject of the Inspiration of the Holy Scriptures and the Divinity, Resurrection, and Atonement of Christ, which seem to be at variance with the Word of God and the Standards of the Church, resolve respectfully to memorialise the College Committee of the Free Church to proceed by libel against Dr. Dods, or take such other means as they may deem requisite in order that the views complained of may be tested by the Word of God and the Standards of the Church, so that all reasonable ground of doubt as to the soundness of the teaching in the College may be removed." Speech on the Case of Professor Marcus Dods, D.D. by ex-Provost Campbell (Greenock: 1890), p. 3.
 2. This Committee had been invested by Act of the General Assembly with powers which related to the supervision and administration of the three theological colleges in Edinburgh, Glasgow, and Aberdeen. These powers included the right to originate and prosecute before the Church Courts processes against any of the professors for heresy or immorality, and also to make the inquiries needful in order to decide whether a case for such action had arisen. Proceedings and Debates, 1890, Appendix V. Also Black and Chrystal, op. cit., p. 191.

What Is A Christian?

In his address "How Far is the Church Responsible for the Present Scepticism?" Dods expressed the firm belief that "what Christ himself required in His followers should be enough for the Church to require."¹ He was convinced that when the Church neglected this position,² she thereby became responsible for a misrepresentation of Christianity. The Church, he felt, had allowed faith in Christ to become identified in the popular mind with faith in a number of doctrines regarding Christ, and had thus made faith needlessly difficult, and "to my mind repellent and impossible."³ He believed that the essential thing was what Christ required, "that men should follow Him."⁴

He did not require them to accept a number of propositions about Him, but to prove their belief in Him by accepting Him as the true Ruler of their life. We have no right to ask more. We have no right to put bars on the door of His fold which he did not put.⁵

This same emphasis was enforced by Dods in his sermon

"What is a Christian?":

Obviously, then, all the belief that is required to make a man a Christian is belief that Christ can unite him to God. If a man believes that with Christ's help he may be transformed into the likeness of God, he has all the belief that is essential. His views of Christ's person may be defective, he may not know much or clearly about Christ's work, he may find himself quite unable to believe a great deal that is generally identified with Christian doctrine; but he is a Christian if he believes that Christ has the will and the power to make him truly a child of God, and if he acts upon this belief.⁶

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1. The Expositor, 8:298, 1888.
 2. This position had been clearly defined and defended by Stillingfleet and Jeremy Taylor.
 3. The Expositor, 8:299, 1888.
 4. Ibid.
 5. Ibid.
 6. Dods, What is a Christian? p. 4.

Dods was inclined to consider a man a Christian if he had had a true Christian experience and lived a true Christian life, though he were unable to accept intellectually the orthodox statement of these doctrines.¹ He laid stress on religious experience as the essential matter and made a needful distinction between a living experience and the intellectual formulation of it. The prevalent position tended to reverse the truth, that spiritual life comes first and the intellectual understanding of it second, or it denied the name Christian to those who possessed the life, if they did not understand and accept its intellectual implication. In Dods' teaching, however, religious experience never degenerated into the weak vaporizing of sentimentalism. His position was carefully guarded against religious anarchism. The standard and judge of truth confirming or correcting individual experience he found in the positive revelation of God communicated through the experience of Israel and consummated in Jesus Christ.

Although the opinions that he expressed in these two addresses were brought under sharpest attack and grossly misrepresented, he continued to hold them for the remainder of his life. In a letter he wrote dated 6th September, 1904, appears this pointed sentence:

I am clear that from our members we have no right to ask any confession save that they accept Christ as their living King.²

The Sub-Committee, while not entirely agreeing with Dods' method of presentation, nevertheless reached the following conclusion:

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1. He would, of course, regard such a man as an immature Christian.
 2. Dods, Later Letters, p. 136.

"[we] are not disposed to challenge what seems to be the main intention of Dr. Dods's statement" of what is a Christian.¹

The Divinity of Christ.

Perhaps the most serious charge brought against Dods during the stormy period of controversy in 1890 was that he "promulgated" the view that the Deity of Christ was an unnecessary doctrine.² In his St. Giles' sermon he had said, "We must not too hastily conclude that even a belief in Christ's divinity is essential to the true Christian."³ Taken in isolation this sentence from a devout Free Churchman appeared startling. Even the Unitarians quoted it as if it had been a testimony to their particular views.⁴ The Sub-Committee, whose task it was to scrutinize Dods' writings, reported, however, that there was much in the sermon to bring out the significance of the great doctrine of Christ's Divinity.⁵ In addition the Sub-Committee declared that "there can be no doubt that Dr. Dods strongly holds and teaches the doctrine of our Lord's Divinity."⁶ Anyone acquainted with Dods himself or his preaching knew "how controlling was his devotion

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1. Proceedings and Debates, 1890, Appendix V, p. 21.
 2. Assembly Papers, No. II, 1890, p. 7. Also James Kerr, Vivisection in Theology and Its Chief Apologist, Prof. Dods, D.D. (Glasgow: Bryce & Sons, 1890).
 3. Dods, What Is A Christian?, p. 8.
 4. Proceedings and Debates, 1890, p. 71. The Unitarians circulated this sermon at their own expense. See p. 5, An Examination of the Sermon What is a Christian by Clericus (Edinburgh: James Gemmell, 1890).
 5. Proceedings and Debates, 1890, Appendix V, p. 21.
 6. Ibid., Appendix V, p. 20.

to the incarnate and crucified Christ."¹ But the sermon under question was preached, not to his own congregation, but to an audience composed of many doubting and sceptical young men. He was simply encouraging them to begin with what light they had when he said:

...we must not too hastily conclude that even a belief in Christ's divinity is essential to the true Christian. To the mature Christian it is essential, no doubt; but in Christ's own life some sincerely followed Him who only at a later period were convinced that He was not only sent by God, but was God. I do not understand how any one who thinks that Christ was merely man...can at the same time trust Him to lift us to fellowship with God; and I cannot think that any one who earnestly strives to live as Christ lived will long retain such an opinion; but reunion to God depends so much more on the conscience and on the heart than on mental enlightenment that I would hope that the faith, small even as a grain of mustard seed, will yet grow up to a sound and healthy plant. The important thing to understand here also is that our religious life may be maintained although we are not theologians enough to understand the co-existence of Three Persons in one Godhead. If we make Christ practically our God by looking to Him for spiritual life, and by giving ourselves to Him as our absolute Lord, our inability to understand the Divine nature, or how that nature dwells in Jesus Christ, need not bring us to conclude that we cannot be Christians.²

Apparently, the Sub-Committee overlooked the second sentence of this passage, for one of the complaints Dods had to make after reading their draft report was that he was represented as encouraging the belief that it was "not calamitous to be an unbeliever in the Divinity of Christ."³ "This is true," he wrote the Sub-Committee, "only if it is not calamitous to be always an immature Christian, and to occupy a position intellectually indefensible."⁴

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1. Article by W.M. Clow in The Scotsman, May 3, 1909. Also Glasgow Herald, May 3, 1909.
 2. Dods, What Is a Christian?, pp. 8-9.
 3. Proceedings and Debates, Appendix V, p. 30, p. 22.
 4. Ibid., Appendix V, p. 30.

One of the most emphatic public statements Dods made during the 1890 controversy was in reply to the conclusions drawn by the Presbyteries of Lorn and Skye regarding his attitude on this point. He vehemently objected to the interpretation put upon some of his statements. Further, he wrote:

It has given me much pain to find myself charged with defection on these fundamental points. I am conscious of none; and it is encouraging to know that many persons have found it natural to put another interpretation on my statements; and have expressed cordial agreement with them. As regards the Divinity of Christ, I can only say, that without that I have no religion, and indeed no God.¹

The Atonement.

The motion which the General Assembly of 1890 passed in connection with the Dods Case contained the following sentence:

This Church steadfastly adheres to the fundamental doctrine of the Atonement as laid down in her standards, and cannot consent to sanction its being set forth as a mere theory, or as only one among many phases or aspects of the Saviour's death.²

It was deemed necessary to include such a statement because of the anxiety created by the way in which Dods had recently spoken of the Atonement. In his St. Giles' sermon he had said, "If, then, we are accepting God's forgiveness, and living humbly in the sunshine of His favour, we need not be seriously disturbed in spirit if we find that we cannot accept what is known as the orthodox theory of the Atonement."³ He then described what was known as the substitutionary theory and also what was known as the moral

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1. Aberdeen Free Press, April 27, 1909; Proceedings and Debates, Appendix V, p. 14.
 2. Proceedings and Debates, 1890, p. 70.
 3. Dods, What is a Christian, p. 7.

theory¹ and added that both theories "produce good Christians."² One of the speakers in the 1890 Assembly criticized Dods for this treatment because the impression made was that these two theories stood on very much the same level, and it was not material which of the two were adopted--that the one was about as defensible and as effective as the other.³ The speaker maintained that what Dods represented as the orthodox theory was just the doctrine of atonement that was laid down in their standards.⁴ He could not consent to have the true and Confessional view of the atonement represented and treated as it was by Dods. He could not have it classed with mere theories.⁵

Dods himself had communicated to the College Committee prior to the Assembly that neither view of the Atonement which he gave in the sermon was his own. He had simply given these views as broad and sufficiently accurate delineations of the two most popular theories. Tactfully he reminded the Committee that "no theory of the Atonement is given in the Confession."⁶ He felt that the following quotations from his sermon on "Christ's Sacrifice and Ours" sufficiently showed what his own theory would be were he called upon to publish "a complete scheme of this intricate and many-sided doctrine":⁷

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1. That theory which described the Saviour's death as a sublime demonstration of divine love.
 2. Ibid., p. 8.
 3. Proceedings and Debates, 1890, p. 72.
 4. Ibid.
 5. Ibid.
 6. Proceedings and Debates, 1890, Appendix V, p. 30.
 7. Ibid.

It was this, then, which was specially taught by the Sin Offering--that men were sinners, that sin deserved death, and that God had provided an atonement by the vicarious suffering of an appointed victim...We must not, like very many in our day, look upon it the Sacrifice of Christ as merely self-dedicatory, and so neglect the expiating element. Neither must we think of it only as a vicarious offering for sin, and decline to think of it as the burnt-offering through which we offer ourselves to God...What He did as our substitute we need not attempt to do over again; what He did as our representative we must ceaselessly aim at. He is our Sin Offering, by whose blood we are cleansed from guilt, and accepted as God's children and people. He is also our burnt-offering, in whose sacrifice we recognize the ideal after which we strive, until by the power of the Holy Spirit our sacrifice of self is also perfect: to disconnect the two is to lose both."¹

Dods never published a "complete scheme" of this doctrine. The fullest treatment he ever gave this subject was in an article originally contributed to The Christian World.² Yet, even in that article he admitted the impossibility of comprehensively defining the Atonement.

It is remarkable that the death of Christ, on which all Christians depend for salvation, and which might therefore be expected to be the most intelligible of all events, is actually one of the most obscure. But it is obscure partly because of its universal significance. There are so many different aspects in which it may be viewed, and so many various directions in which its influence applies itself, that it is impossible to give any definition of its significance comprehensive enough to include all, impossible to do more than recognize its significance from one point of view.³

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1. Ibid. Appendix V, p. 25. See Dods, Christ and Man (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1909), pp. 25-37 for sermon on "Christ's Sacrifice and Ours." The Sub-Committee, after examining Dods' teaching on the Atonement, were persuaded that his view definitely did include the idea of Christ's expiation, which some critics had denied. Furthermore, the Sub-Committee frankly stated that they could "find no ground for imputing to Dods any teaching, which, according to his intention and according to a fair view of the context, can be qualified as contradicting confessional doctrine." Proceedings and Debates, Appendix V, p. 26.
 2. His article along with sixteen others was later published in book form. The Atonement in Modern Religious Thought (London: James Clarke & Co., 1902.)
 3. Ibid., p. 178.

Dods own point of view was most succinctly expressed in a letter to a friend:

His atonement was nothing more than His quietly and lovingly accepting all that sin could do against Him. It is this that overcomes evil and at last breaks the heart of the sinner.¹

The Resurrection of Christ.

When the critics accused Dods of underrating the Resurrection of Christ, they usually cited only one passage from his writings to support their contention. This passage was contained not in the London address or the St. Giles' sermon but in his recently published commentary on First Corinthians.² The passage had reference to men like Keim, who, while opposing the ultra-rationalistic view that Christ simply remained a dead man, still found difficulty in admitting the bodily resurrection. As encouragement to such men Dods wrote:

The difference between a disembodied spirit and a spiritual body is really unappreciable to our present knowledge. And if any one finds it impossible to believe in the bodily resurrection of Christ, but easy to believe in his present life and power, it would only be mischievous to require of him a faith he cannot give, in addition to a faith which brings him into real fellowship with Christ.³

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1. Dods, Later Letters, p. 122.
 2. Dods, The First Epistle to the Corinthians, The Expositor's Bible (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1889). Many ministers in the Highlands objected to this book as much as they objected to his sermons "Revelation and Inspiration" and "What is A Christian?"
 3. Ibid., p. 331. Also p. 332. One of the few Highlands ministers who enthusiastically supported Dods wrote of the way in which this passage was treated by Dods' critics: "Dr. Dods's chapters on the Resurrection, in his Commentary on 1st Corinthians, are really a magnificent cumulative argument on behalf of that central fact of our faith. And yet even here he has been misunderstood. Mr. Macaskill's extracts in his Report give a very good specimen of the way in which, by omitting Dr. Dods's own position and positive beliefs, his statement of his opponents' views are taken as his own, and his charitable judgment of the men holding these views is taken as at least, a half approval or condoning of them." p. 12, Dods and His Critics by Donald Martin (Dingwall: 1890).

After studying the context in which this passage occurred, the Sub-Committee recorded their decision that they could find no reason for charging Dods with holding defective doctrine on the subject of the Resurrection. On the contrary, they took the opportunity "to express their sense of the remarkable power and completeness of the argument on this subject," which was contained in Dods' First Corinthians.¹

Perhaps the most lucid treatment of the Resurrection which Dods ever gave was in an apologetic sermon preached in Renfield United Free Church thirteen years after the 1890 controversy. He, along with other outstanding ministers, was invited to deliver a sermon on one aspect of the Apostles' Creed. The fact that Dods was assigned the topic "Did Christ Rise From the Dead?" indicated the confidence men had in his adherence to the doctrine of Christ's Resurrection. He opened his sermon with these words:

The Resurrection of Jesus Christ is not merely the greatest event in history: it is the hinge on which all history turns. Our view of the past and of the future must be entirely altered if it should be made out that he did not rise from the dead. As Paul saw and declared: "If Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain and your faith is also vain." If Christ died and in that "lone Syrian town" lies in His grave like other men, then the whole Gospel of the Apostles falls to the ground, for the glad tidings they proclaimed was that the Lord whom they had known and loved had risen from the dead and was now alive at the centre of power.²

1. Proceedings and Debates, 1890, Appendix V, p. 22.

2. Questions of Faith (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1904), p. 77.

Inspiration.

Commissioners attending the General Assembly of 1890 were told that it was in reference to Dods' teaching on the Inspiration of Holy Scripture that the chief anxiety had been felt throughout the Church.¹ The Sub-Committee had devoted the major portion of their consideration to this aspect of his teaching. There were four points which concerned the Sub-Committee: (1) Dods' view of progressive revelation in the Old Testament, (2) his rejection of the theory of verbal infallibility, (3) his statements regarding inspiration, and (4) his adherence to the Confession of Faith.

(1) His view of progressive revelation in the Old Testament.

One of the main features in connection with Dods' treatment of revelation and inspiration concerned his view of the Old Testament. In 1876 he had written:

No doubt the idea of God conveyed in the earlier portions of the record is incomplete, but it is unfair and unscientific to lay hold upon the first steps in a process and proclaim their insufficiency. We must accept the fully developed Biblical idea of God, and doing so, we find that beyond this idea of God men have not yet risen.²

His address in London in 1889 emphasized with greater clarity than in any previous writing his concept of progressive revelation. The passage in this address which especially evoked the wrath of his critics was an elaboration of his view of the Old Testament:

...Thousands believe with him [Col. Ingersoll] that Christianity stands or falls with the infallibility of the Old Testament; and the Church itself has no formulated doctrine of revelation, its methods and its progress, which accounts for the mistakes and the immoralities of the Old Testament on a principal which satisfies the thinking man.

1. Proceedings and Debates, 1890, pp. 26, 83, 73.

2. Dods, Revelation and Inspiration, p. 13.

The Old Testament history is a faithful record of a race which was being trained to know God and to love righteousness, and it shows us the steps in their progress. The leading men of this race were sincere and devoted servants of Jehovah, and were in true communion with him, but they had not a perfect knowledge of Him. They were gradually advancing towards perfect knowledge which came at last in Christ. They were able to understand only so much of the divine nature as they had grown up to, as a child cannot understand the whole of his father's character and ways. And these imperfections in the knowledge of God, the Bible, being a true and faithful record, freely recounts, boldly showing us how even the best men among the Jews misunderstood God, but by how adhering to His law and seeking to hold fellowship with Him, they gradually eliminated from their knowledge of Him what was crude and unworthy...To look upon the Old Testament as depicting a final stage in knowledge and righteousness is a fatal error. Revelation has been a growing light from dawn to perfect day, and though many in the gray dawn served God as faithfully as their successors it was not possible to know Him as well or interpret Him as accurately.¹

Dods was here answering the questions which he knew existed in the minds of many thoughtful people throughout Scotland who were disturbed over the "very strange points in the morality of the Old Testament."² The Sub-Committee admitted that "an increasing number of thoughtful students have been led to maintain that some matters referred to in the Old Testament, in terms that suggest a divine sanction, were only suffered at the time in consideration of the state of mind prevailing among the people."³

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1. Dods, "How Far is the Church Responsible for the Present Scepticism?" The Expositor, 8:301-303, 1888.
 2. William G. Blaikie, Letter to the Rev. Andrew A. Bonar (Edinburgh: Macniven and Wallace, 1890), p. 9. Professor Blaikie, in replying to a manifesto issued by Bonar on the Dods and Bruce Cases, wrote: "But you may be very sure that the vast mass of our thoughtful people believe, in whatever terms it may be put, that there are very strange points in the morality of the Old Testament."
 3. Proceedings and Debates, 1890, Appendix V, p. 27.

(2) His rejection of the theory of verbal infallibility. Dods was accused of wounding the hearts of many,¹ when, in his inaugural lecture, he had characterized the verbal or so-called mechanical theory of inspiration as an offence to honest men, as dishonoring to God, as having turned inquirers into sceptics, and as a view that ought to be branded heretical in every Christian Church.² He advanced much the same proposition in his address to the Pan-Presbyterian Council:

Secondly, the Church is responsible for present scepticism by producing the impression that the Bible must either be accepted as throughout infallible or not at all ... A lad grows up under the impression that the Church accepts all the statements in the Bible as infallibly true, and requires all believers to accept that theory. He understands that there is no middle position between accepting the whole of Scripture and rejecting the whole of it. He has been taught that the infallibility of the Bible is the ground of the whole Christian faith, and accordingly, when he finds that there are in the Bible what he conceives to be mistakes, he fancies the foundations are removed, and he yields himself to unbelief. It is the duty of the Church to make it plain that faith in Christ is not bound up with faith in the infallibility of Scripture.³

When the College Committee indicated their doubt that "such baneful results" had followed from the verbal theory, Dods replied, "I can only say...with the immovable conviction that comes of personal knowledge, that many sceptics have been made by claiming for Scripture an adhesion and a faith which belong to Christ alone."⁴

1. Ibid., p. 74.

2. Dods, Recent Progress in Theology (Edinburgh: Macniven & Wallace, 1889), p. 30. See Proceedings and Debates, 1890, Appendix V, p. 26.

3. Dods, "How Far is the Church Responsible for the Present Scepticism?" The Expositor, 8:299-302, 1888.

4. Proceedings and Debates, 1890, Appendix V, p. 31.

(3) His statements regarding inspiration. Dods himself was one who had struggled with the problems involved in adhering to the verbal theory of inspiration. As a young student he accepted the theory of verbal inspiration. While it is true that the standards of the Free Church did not impose a doctrine of verbal inerrancy, this was nevertheless, the prevalent, almost universal, view of the subject in the Scottish Church of that day.¹

Dods' own father, in his Remarks on the Bible, had declared that "If the Scriptures are spurned by the infidel, when they are presented to him as wholly the word of God, it is preposterous to suppose that they will command his reverence when presented to him as partly the word of God, and partly that of man. Give the infidel one book, or one verse, and upon the same principle he has a right to demand the surrender of the whole Bible."²

Dods' Professors at New College also generally accepted the theory of verbal infallibility. Dr. Duncan, for example, taught his students that they must not look beyond the language of Holy Scripture. "God," he said, "employs human speech; but He Himself selects the words that are to express His thoughts. He leaves not man to put words on them; the words are as much the Spirit's as the ideas."³

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1. Proceedings and Debates, 1878, p. 238; Speeches in the Rev. Dr. Dods' Case (Glasgow: David Bryce & Son, 1878), p. 5. At the meeting of Glasgow and Ayr in 1878 one speaker declared that Dods' view of inspiration was a "new doctrinal position, so far as the Free Church is concerned. These certainly are not the views that have been hitherto held in this Church, and promulgated from her pulpits and professorial chairs." Howie, The State of the Question (Glasgow: Charles Glass & Co., 1878), p. 30.
 2. Quoted on p. 7 of Speeches in the Rev. Dr. Dods Case, Glasgow: David Bryce & Son, 1878.
 3. Black and Chrystal, op. cit., pp. 75-6.

It was through his reading that young Dods first came into contact with other views on the subject. In his Inaugural Lecture as a Professor at New College he shared this experience with his audience:

I can very well remember the shock of surprise and anger with which, in the library of this college, I read the late Dean Alford's neat and conclusive disposal of the theory of verbal inspiration, and how by exhibiting the impossibility of harmonising the synoptical gospels, he demonstrated that literal accuracy was out of the question.¹

In the year 1863 Dods read Bishop Cclosen's work on the Pentateuch. In common with most of the orthodox he condemned the book as "dangerous."² However, it was after reading this book that in a letter to his sister he made the prophetic comment, "I think our views of inspiration will be greatly altered in future years." "Indeed mine are very different," he continued, "from those I received from Gaussen twelve years ago."³

It would be interesting to trace in detail the evolution of Dods' thought on this subject from 1863 to 1876⁴, but he has

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1. Dods, Recent Progress in Theology, pp. 30-1.
 2. "A very dangerous book, a popular and wholly one-sided exposition of the leading difficulties which have hitherto been handled only in scientific introductions." p. 266 of Early Letters.
 3. Dods, Early Letters, p. 266. Presumably he was referring to Gaussen's book Plenary Inspiration of Holy Scripture.
 4. 1863 was the date of the letter referred to above. 1876 was the date of his sermon on "Revelation and Inspiration."

left few clues. In the spring of 1866, just one and a half years after going to his first church, he delivered in Glasgow a lecture on "The Revelation of God in Scripture, Viewed in Respect Both to Theological Science and to the Proper Use of Creeds" but this lecture did not discuss inspiration.¹ During the thirteen year period from 1863 to 1876 Dods undoubtedly spent much time in studying the matter of revelation and inspiration, for when he preached his famous sermon² in 1876 he expressed views from which he never departed.³

In this sermon he frankly rejected the theory of inspiration which had long been current in his own Church. He maintained that the only inspiration worth contending for was "the ability to see and represent truly a revelation of God."⁴ This idea of inspiration was consistent with his belief that "the Holy Scriptures as originally written contained such inaccuracies as occur in ordinary writings through imperfect information or lapse of memory, and thus

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1. Fairbairn and others, Divine Revelation Explained and Vindicated: A Course of Lectures for the Times (Glasgow: David Bryce & Co., 1866), pp. 169-212. At the time Dods wrote this lecture he was greatly distressed in contemplating the havoc which Broad Church theories were making of the doctrines of the Atonement and especially Revelation. It seemed to him that a modification in the wording of the Westminster Confession would help eliminate much of the tendency to rationalize away the divine authorship of the Bible.
 2. In publishing this sermon he acknowledged his indebtedness to three books: Erskine's Spiritual Order, Horne's Reason and Revelation and Rainy's Cunningham Lectures. See p. 27 of Revelation and Inspiration (Glasgow: John N. Mackinlaw, 1877).
 3. One who knew Dods over a long period of time said: "He arrived at his conclusions slowly and patiently, but when they became his own, he steadfastly adhered to them. This gave him a unique influence over his fellow-men. One felt while listening to him that he was so eminently sane, so absolutely transparent, that conviction of the truth of his message was irresistible." Thomas Ogilvie, Cover of East United Free Church Magazine, May 2, 1909. Also Aberdeen Evening Gazette, April 26, 1909.
 4. Dods, Revelation and Inspiration, p. 25.

never were possessed of absolute infallibility."¹ These inaccuracies, he contended, are so "trifling as in no appreciable degree to damage the historicity or trustworthiness of Scripture."² In brief, the sermon mainly taught that the revelation of God is infallible although the record of that revelation in the Bible is not verbally infallible.³

When Dods preached this sermon he had already become known as one of the most competent Biblical scholars in Scotland.⁴ Many of those who heard his sermons and read his books agreed that "never was there a more reverent and loving student of the Bible than Marcus Dods."⁵ He was generally thought of as a conservative, orthodox minister who could put old truth in new, interesting, and relevant form. Even those who disagreed with some of his ideas recognized his extraordinary ability and character.⁶ Because of his reputation, everything he published was well received and widely circulated. This was especially true of his sermon "Revelation and Inspiration". As one of his critics said, "Coming

1. Ibid., p. 15.

2. Ibid., p. 10.

3. See pp.108-12 for full treatment of this sermon.

4. The fact that he had already been considered for a professorship on two different occasions attests to his scholarly ability.

5. Cannock News, April 30, 1909.

6. Dods' critics in the 1877-8 controversy freely acknowledged that he held a "pre-eminent position in the Free Church" and that they held him in "esteem" and "highly valued" his preaching. See William Mitchell, Criticism of Dr. Marcus Dods' Sermon (Glasgow: 1877), p.11; Robert Bremner, Is the Bible Infallible? (Glasgow: David Bryce & Son, 1878), p.1.

from Dr. Dods, the sermon has been read and re-read by thousands."¹ Public reaction to the sermon was varied, but unquestionably, there were many who were receptive to the ideas contained in the sermon because they had previously developed confidence in Dods as one whose sane and sound expositions of Scripture enriched their lives.²

Although this sermon was eventually withdrawn from circulation and never again preached in the exact form,³ Dods continued to expound the same views in articles, sermons, addresses, and informal discussions, so that by 1889, when he was nominated for the professorship, his views had become widely known throughout the Church.⁴ When his address to the Pan-Presbyterian Council again fanned the fires of controversy, one who had known him since his early days at Renfield Church wrote that "to explain away his clearly defined position with regard to inspiration is to minimize a truth which has been one of his life-aims to investigate, to prove, and to press home to his generation."⁵ Thus, it was Dods

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1. William Mitchell, op. cit., pp. 11-12.
 2. Christian Globe, April 29, 1909; Christian World, April 29, 1909.
 3. The curious history of this sermon has been referred to in Section One of this chapter. As long as the sermon was objected to only on the score of its being needlessly startling or of its being published at an injudicious time, Dods yielded to the judgment of those he knew to be competent, and withdrew the sermon from circulation for three weeks. When, however, charges were made that the teaching embodied in the sermon was contradicted by the Confession, the sermon went back into print. (This information was contained in a letter written by Dods and read to the November 29th meeting of Glasgow Free Presbytery. Reported in The Daily Review, November 30, 1877). On the 5th of December, 1877, he again indicated his willingness to withdraw the sermon "on the distinct understanding that...the views expressed in my sermon and preface are to be tolerated within the Church..."
 4. Glasgow Herald, April 27, 1909; Aberdeen Evening Gazette, April 26, 1909; Proceedings and Debates, 1889, pp. 73-89.
 5. Proceedings and Debates, 1889, p. 79. Mr. W.R. Taylor believed that hundreds had come to see, with Dods, that while Scripture was throughout divinely inspired, the sacred writers were obviously

who unostentatiously led the Free Church into a consideration of a more tenable view of inspiration.¹ Some have assumed that W. Robertson Smith's writings precipitated this consideration, but reference has been made to the fact that inspiration was never a main issue in the Smith Case, for Professor Smith, while saying much about Biblical dates and authorship and construction, never touched on inspiration in his article "Bible." It was primarily in relation to Dods that discussion on this point was carried out in the Free Church during the period from 1877 to 1890.²

(4) His adherence to the Confession of Faith. The final point which the Sub-committee considered in conjunction with Dods' views of inspiration was the matter of his adherence to the Confession

left free, not merely to use their own forms of expression and different styles of thought, but to draw on their own powers of observation and memory, and on the testimony of others, for the writing down of the incident recorded. The inspiration under which the sacred writers wrote did not secure and was not intended to secure complete accuracy in all their statements.

1. Other men, like Bruce, Lindsay, Salmond and Whyte, were also promulgators of freedom of critical inquiry, but their writings did not give prominence to the subject of inspiration as did Dods'. For example, at the 1889 election men objected to Dods' view of inspiration and said nothing in regard to the view of Salmond, (who was also a nominee). Yet, as W. Ross Taylor pointed out, Dods and Salmond "stood on precisely the same ground." (Proceedings and Debates, 1889, p. 80). Dods' views, however, had become widely known and publicized.
3. 1877 was the date of publication of his sermon "Revelation and Inspiration" and the beginning of the first Dods Case. 1890 was the date of the last Dods Case when a substantial majority in the Free Church General Assembly agreed that his views on inspiration were to be tolerated.

of Faith. After investigating his writings they found that in every particular he was fundamentally orthodox. Even his statement that there are some unimportant inaccuracies in Scripture did not come into conflict with any of the points in the Confession of Faith. They realized that he accepted as forming integral parts of Scripture the books there described as canonical; that he believed the purpose of Scripture to be as there stated; and that he regarded the Scripture as containing everything essential to man's salvation, faith and life. Because the Confession formulates no theory as to the mode of inspiration, he claimed for himself the liberty which it allows--the liberty to hold any theory on the subject consistent with the statements of the Confession.

Dods' book, An Introduction to the New Testament,¹ was cited at the Assembly of 1889 as an example of his basic conservatism. One of the speakers in defending his "soundness" said that "Dods had in that book, on all the critical questions which he had taken up, come forward as the undaunted champion of the strictly conservative and orthodox side."²

The Sub-committee, in dealing with Dods' outspoken views on inspiration, were faced with a grave responsibility because "doctrine opposed to that of Dods had been maintained as the true line of defence, by many of those most venerated, trusted, and beloved in years gone by,"³ and many members of the Free Church were reluctant to change from this position. In the face of this delicate situation

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1. An Introduction to the New Testament (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1888).
 2. Proceedings and Debates, 1889, p. 78.
 3. Proceedings and Debates, 1890, Appendix V, p. 27.

the Sub-committee reached the significant decision that they were not prepared to regard Dods' view of Inspiration as a disqualification for office in the Free Church. They based their decision on the following reasons. "In the first place, although the contrary view has been so very generally accepted among us, the Sub-committee are not satisfied that Dr. Dods's view is excluded by the Confession." Secondly, "the modern scrutiny of the Scriptures and the searching detail of attack and defence have unquestionably produced in the minds of many learned and devout men a strong impression of the necessity" of reconsidering what is to be maintained in respect to the verbal accuracy of Scripture and to progressive revelation in the Old Testament.¹ Moreover, the Committee expressed the opinion that the time had come not for disciplinary measures but for grave, respectful and considerate discussion.² When Dods read this section of the Committee's report, he was impressed with the "great and wise concession" that the Committee had made. Consequently, he wrote:

I cannot sufficiently express my satisfaction in finding that the Sub-Committee is of opinion that a case has arisen for... discussion. If the Church will but recognise that our doctrine of Scripture may possibly need revisal, and will allow "grave, respectful, and considerate discussion," nothing but good can result to our Church and to the Christian people of this country.³

1. Ibid.

2. Ibid.

3. Ibid., p. 31.

Dods and His Critics.

Several months before the Sub-Committee arrived at its final conclusion¹ three of Dods' most extreme critics, becoming impatient with the ordinary channels of ecclesiastical procedure, had on their own initiative formed a libel against Dods and had petitioned the Free Presbytery of Edinburgh to receive it on 26th February, 1890.² In addition to this proposed libel which called for disciplinary action to be taken against Dods,³ inflammatory pamphlets were circulated which either clamored for his resignation⁴ or

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1. Proceedings and Debates, 1890, Appendix V, p. 28.
 2. Assembly Papers, No. II, Case of Professor Dods, 1890. The libel was subscribed by Murdoch Macaskill, Minister of Dingwall; William Sinclair, Minister at Plockton, and James Scott, D.D., minister at Aberlour. (p. 34). These three petitioned Edinburgh Presbytery to receive the libel and to serve it on Dods. Presbytery, in effect, never took action in regard to the libel, but referred "the whole matter" to the General Assembly. (Extract Minute of Free Presbytery of Edinburgh, 30th day of April, 1890, pp. 3-4 Assembly Papers II). On eight different counts the libel accused Dods of publishing and promulgating doctrines and opinions "which contradict or are opposed to the holy Scriptures and the doctrines and Confession of Faith of the Free Church of Scotland." These eight counts dealt with: 1) inspiration 2) Divinity of Christ 3) the Atonement 4) Resurrection of Christ 5) regeneration by grace 6) justification 7) saving faith 8) moral law. (pp. 7-8 of Assembly Papers II).
 3. Assembly Papers II, p. 34.
 4. As examples of the obnoxious pamphlets in circulation two especially may be cited. Professors Dods' and Bruce's Teaching by a Layman (Edinburgh: 1890) in which this appeal to Dods was made, "Meanwhile, dear sir, withdraw these objectionable and harmful statements, or be persuaded to retire from the College Chair, for people are losing confidence in you as a teacher." (p. 7). Also Theological Jugglery in the Free Church, A Layman on Professor Dods, (Edinburgh: J.B. Fairgrieve, 1890) in which occurs this shallow passage: "Is a minister of a church to be allowed to receive a salary for undermining the doctrines which at his ordination he vowed to uphold? Why should the Church tolerate in its clergy a code of professional morality which men of the world spurn? The laity have a right to demand that, above all things, the clergy shall be honest men--that they shall not seek to earn their bread by posing as theological jugglers...If the Confession of Faith is to be the Confession of the Church, then ministers like Professor Dods have no business in it. If they cannot see the inconsistency of their position, by stern experience

demanded that he be cast out of the Church.¹ The most intense agitation was centered in the Highlands, where, owing to gross misinterpretations and misrepresentations, Dods was considered unsound by the majority of Free Church ministers and people.² One Highland minister even debarred from Communion all those who believed in the opinions of Professor Dods.³

What were Dods' reactions to the extreme misrepresentations of his views, to the acrimonious debates in the church courts, and to the distrust and suspicion with which he was regarded by

they must be taught the elementary principles of professional honesty." (p. 16).

1. The Dods Controversy (Edinburgh: Macniven & Wallace, 1890), pp. 5-6. In this pamphlet a Free Church Elder speaks in defense of Dods' position: "All I would say is that it is most painful to see how Christian men would drive out of the Christian Church, as far as they have the power to do so, others who are at one with them on all the great questions of the faith, merely because on one or two points their opinions, or possibly only their ways of expressing them, are not in accordance with what their accusers have been accustomed to."
2. One of the few Highland ministers who supported Dods wrote in regard to the situation which had developed there: "He is represented as saying either what he never said, or said not in the sense in which the words are taken." "Resolutions have been passed in defence of the doctrines of grace, which Dr. Dods himself would have heartily signed or seconded, and speeches have been made in defence of the Bible...which Dr. Dods would have rapped his approval." Donald Martin in Dods and His Critics (Dingwall: 1890), pp. 2,4.
 Chief organizer of the opposition in the Highlands was Murdoch Macaskill whose mode of procedure was "that of secret conclave" and "excited public meeting." See Martin's pamphlet, p. 4. The most conspicuous of Macaskill's efforts was a Conference held in the Inverness Music Hall which passed the following Resolution: "We, ministers and office-bearers of the Free Church of Scotland belonging to the Northern Synods, in this Conference assembled, rejoice in the testimony borne by the Westminster Standards to the Divine Authority of the Holy Scriptures, and to the other fundamental doctrines of the Gospel, and are agreed that it is our duty to unite and assist one another in endeavouring, in our place and callings, to promote the maintenance and defence of evangelical truth according to the said Westminster Standards." See Martin, op. cit. p. 5.
3. Presbyterian Quarterly, 1890, p. 625.

some of his fellow clergymen? Outwardly, he appeared to regard the whole turmoil with a calm placidity which was impressive in its dignity. "One would think that the object of an agitation would himself be agitated," wrote one of his students, "but Dr. Dods did his daily task without any show of feeling."¹

Although outwardly imperturbable, Dods was really a man of most sensitive feeling.² His family, his friends, and his students realized that these were dark and hard times for him. Almost daily he was attacked in letter, pamphlet, speech, and even sermon. Many who did not actually attack him were cold and aloof. At one period during the winter of 1889-90 he was receiving so much abusive mail that "the Porter diverted some of it without letting him become aware of this fact."³ It was the practice of certain newspapers to represent him as if he had broken with the faith of the Church and the standards of the Church.⁴ "To one the very soul of candour and honesty, to be distrusted and to be described as little better than dishonourable in continuing in the Church while disloyal to its standards, was a sincere pain."⁵ Even the Sub-Committee whose duty it was to deal with his impeached writings

1. The British Monthly, 4:89, March, 1904.

2. See Dods, Early Letters which contains his diary of his probation period.

3. Mrs. A. Herbert Gray, his daughter, in an interview with the writer in London, July 23, 1955.

4. Proceedings and Debates of the General Assembly, 1890, p. 74. The Courier in its leading article of December 13, 1889, on the Inverness Conference, not only misinterpreted Dods' views but misquoted him. It also said "The people have awakened to the consciousness that the teaching given by some of their accredited doctors of divinity is radically different from that which formerly prevailed in the Free Church."

5. The British Monthly, 4:9, March, 1904.

assigned to him full blame for the current strife. In the face of this injustice Dods could not remain silent. He wrote:

I cannot but express my surprise and disappointment at finding that the blame of creating the present "alarm" in the Church is laid at my door. Does no blame in this matter attach to men who raised the cry of alarm regarding my writings, when on their own confession they had not read them? Is no censure to be pronounced on those who naively owned that they had read them with the sole purpose of finding fault?....I am quite willing to bear my share of the responsibility of raising the question of the infallibility of the letter of Scripture, but the "alarm" thereby created in the Church must be referred to other sources, in the Church and out of it."¹

He confided to his New College students on the last day of the 1889-90 Session that without the support he had received in his class, he could not have gone on.² In one of his few surviving personal letters from this period, he wrote the following to Professor Blackie:

Your kind note comes like a ray of sunshine piercing the clouds of suspicion and anger which I unconsciously raise by my utterances....Our Church, especially in Edinburgh (scarcely at all in Glasgow where people do good and do not aspire to the function of the accuser of the brethren) is in a most uncomfortable state--on edge and in unstable equilibrium--but I think better times are before us.³

Even though Dods in this letter referred to the unpleasant situation in which he found himself, his characteristic reserve did not permit him to disclose how intensely he felt the sting of unjust criticism. It remained for one who had known him over a long period to make this disclosure in later years:

The controversy which beat upon him surprised and vexed him. Some of its methods gave him keen pain. But what

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1. Proceedings and Debates, 1890, Appendix V, p. 32.
 2. The British Monthly, 4:189, March 1904.
 3. Blackie Letters 1889-91 MS 2638 f. 74 (National Library, Edinburgh).

brought him a sadness few could comfort was the doubt cast on his loyalty to the Gospel of Christ.¹

Although Dods' sensitive nature suffered at the hands of his critics, those who knew him best claimed that he never became bitter or resentful. The conduct and attitude which he displayed during the 1890 controversy was indicative of this aspect of his character. An American Presbyterian, in writing a report of the Dods Case for one of his Church's periodicals made the observation, "In pleasing contrast with the hysterical and bitter speeches of the minority were the dignified and conciliatory expressions of the Professor."² In a sermon which Dods preached three years after the first Dods Case, he spoke his convictions, born of experience:

It is a general law capable of extensive application that a man is defiled not by what is from without but by what is from within. No lowly occupation defiles you, but discontent in it or proud shame of it does defile you. Not ill-natured remarks of people about your conduct does you any harm, but your vindictive or resentful feeling which these remarks excite does you harm.³

The fact that he applied this to his own life is indicated in Henry Drummond's remark that the only thing Dods' critics ever achieved was "the wounding of a spirit which has met even the meanest of its enemies without impatience, anger, or disrespect."⁴

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1. W.M. Clow in a sermon preached in Stevenson Memorial Church, Glasgow, May 2, 1909 and quoted in the Glasgow Herald, May 3 1909.
 2. W.W. Moore, Hampden-Sidney, Va., quoted in the Presbyterian Quarterly, 1890, p. 625.
 3. Dods, Sermon MS., "Our Lord's Teaching on Hand-Washing," p. 7.
 4. The Expositor, 10:72, 1889.

The Assembly's Decision.

The Dods Case occupied a whole day in the Assembly of 1890. On the 27th of May, the Assembly Hall, which holds about two thousand people, was packed as never before perhaps in its history. As early as eight o'clock in the morning people began to gather, and by ten, when the Assembly was called to order, not a vacant seat could be seen. The day's debate was anticipated with keen anxiety for it was believed that another crisis had come.¹

It was through the report of the College Committee that the Dods Case came before the Assembly. The final result of the debate was the carrying by a substantial majority of the "official" motion,² moved by Dr. Adam. The Assembly declined to institute a process for heresy, but, after declaring the Church's continued adherence to various cardinal articles of doctrine, exhorted Dods to teach the Church's faith, and to avoid lines of argument and modes of expression which would "wound those that tremble at the Divine Word."³

1. Aberdeen Journal, April 27, 1909.

2. The exact wording of Dr. Adam's motion was: "The Assembly approve of the Report of the College Committee in respect of the conclusion arrived at, that the writings of Dr. Dods do not afford ground for instituting a process against him as teaching what is at variance with the standards of the Church. "But having regard to questions which have been raised in connection with certain passages of Dr. Dods' writings, the Assembly find it necessary to declare as follows: (1) This Church holds immovably the cardinal doctrine of our Lord's Divinity, and highly disapproves of all representations, by whatever motive dictated, which tend to lower the sense of its vital importance in the minds of many hearers of the Gospel." Similar declarations were made in regard to the Atonement, the Resurrection of Christ. In connection with Holy Scripture, the motion declared: "this Church continues to hold...that they are 'all given by inspiration of God to be the rule of faith and life,' and that of their infallible and divine authority we are assured by the inward work of the Holy Spirit. She views the use of the term 'mistakes and immoralities' to describe recognised difficulties in the Scriptures as utterly unwarranted, and fitted to grave offence." Then followed the exhortation to Dods.

3. Proceedings and Debates, 1890, p. 70.

On such occasions as this the General Assembly had to deal not only with a person but with the situation in the Church, which was at this time difficult and complex. A writer familiar with the Free Church in this period explained:

The preserving of unity in a Church containing at the one end the "Highland host" and at the other the higher critics was a task in comparison with which the leadership of a political party is simplicity itself. Many of those, on both extremes, who criticise the action of the Church's leaders do so in the absolute safety that they themselves will not be called on to undertake the task of piloting the Church; the "opposition" in the Assembly is not burdened with the restraining responsibility that it may have to carry on the "government."¹

Some people, however, were unable to perceive the necessity for the Church's policy of compromise on this occasion. For example, a writer for the secular press referred to this Assembly's attempts "to please the malcontents rather than grapple with the truth."²

The decision of this Assembly was not completely satisfactory to either side. The Highland ministers were disappointed that Dods was allowed to continue in his Chair.³ Dods' friends, on the other

1. P. Carnegie Simpson, British Monthly, 4:190, March, 1904.

2. Glasgow Herald, April 27, 1909.

3. A statement of dissent was read immediately after the decision of the Assembly was declared. Shortly after the adjournment of the Assembly, a secret conclave of the malcontents was held in Glasgow. At later meetings held in June and September an elaborate manifesto was adopted, setting forth reasons for dissatisfaction with the decisions of the Assembly. The statement was published and widely circulated with a solicitation for signatures of office-bearers. An unbiased observer from America, after observing the actions of these men before, during, and after the Assembly of 1890, made the prophetic comment that these men one day "will probably cause a defection which will sadly cripple the real friends of the truth." Rev. W.W. Moore, Hampden-Sidney, Va., quoted in Presbyterian Quarterly, 1890, p. 625.

For further information regarding the manifesto Cf. Letter to the Rev. Andrew A. Bonar, D.D. by Prof. W.G. Blaikie (Edinburgh: Macniven and Wallace, 1890); Reply to Letter of Professor Blaikie by Robert Howie (Glasgow: David Bryce and Son, 1890); Statement by Ministers and Other Office-Bearers of the Free Church in Regard to the Decisions of Last General Assembly.

hand, were displeased with the unfairness of the Assembly in admonishing Dods and yet saying nothing to those who were doing their utmost to stir up distrust of some of the noblest of the Church's teachers.¹ Others, more satisfied, considered that the "storm had passed over leaving Dr. Dods in his chair and in possession of the unabated confidence of the community."²

It was only in the ensuing years that men could see clearly the significance of the 1890 decision. The important thing in the Assembly's deliverance was that in leaving Dods' professorial position untouched, it thereby reaffirmed the permissibility of his views under the standards of the Church. More specifically, it affirmed the permissibility of a "view which did not claim for the Bible that verbal inerrancy which had hitherto been almost universally bound up with the doctrine of Inspiration."³ Men of the older orthodox school had insisted that the admission of existence in the Biblical record of discrepancies in non-essential details destroyed a very basis of faith. There had been a persistent attempt on the part of these men at the Assembly to get the broader views ruled out.⁴ Principal Rainy, while himself cautious

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1. Proceedings and Debates, 1890, p. 86, Mr. Renny's speech; p. 87, Mr. Garden's speech; p. 107, Mr. Jenkins's speech.
 2. Biblical World, 7:249, April, 1896.
 3. Simpson, Life of Rainy, Vol. II, p. 112.
 4. Proceedings and Debates, 1890, p. 79, Mr. Howie; p. 83, Mr. Galloway; p. 101, Mr. Watt; p. 110, Mr. McEwan; p. 93, Mr. Macaskill. Mr. Macaskill told the Assembly he carried this message to them from the Highlands: "Pass your motions and shield your professors, but let this House in any way degrade the Holy Word of God, and you may bid good-bye as a Free Church to your influence in the Highlands."

in his views about inspiration and inclined to hold the conservative view, "still was far too experienced an ecclesiastic and far too good a theologian"¹ to consent to that attempt. He declared in the Assembly that he would not vote for any motion which did not assert that there was no ground for process against Dods.² The Free Church owed much to those far-sighted men in the 1890 Assembly who prevented a fatally premature pronouncement on the manner or degree of inspiration from being made at that critical time. The ultimate effect of the 1890 Dods Case was a victory for liberty of thought and freedom of discussion.

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1. British Monthly, 4:190, March, 1904.
 2. Proceedings and Debates, 1890, p. 112.
 3. Mr. J. Murray Garden, an elder from Aberdeen, speaking at the Assembly of 1890 said he claimed for the professors of the Free Church "liberty which teachers of the Bible ought to have." He continued: "At the Reformation their ancestors fought for religious liberty. At the Disruption their fathers contended for ecclesiastical liberty. Now they had before them the question of theological liberty. They must allow theology, as a science, full liberty to investigate the facts of the Word of God." p. 88, Proceedings and Debates, 1890.

CHAPTER FOUR

HIS TEACHING MINISTRY AS A PROFESSOR

The autumn of 1889 marked the beginning of Marcus Dods' illustrious twenty years¹ as Professor of New Testament Exegesis in New College, Edinburgh. It was a very appropriate and advantageous time for a man of his temperament, training, and background to be assuming the responsibilities of such a Chair. A relatively new approach to Biblical studies had been introduced by the nineteenth century pioneers in textual and historical criticism, and the time had come for Christian scholars to apply the new methods in ways that would be meaningful and useful to the average person in the Church. Dods was ideally qualified for this work, and his own love of teaching enabled him effectively to train others to take full advantage of the new opportunity that was before them.

The purpose of this chapter and the following one is to direct attention to Dods' work as a Professor. Comments made by his students and colleagues have been gleaned from numerous newspapers and journals, but, since the quality and scope of his teaching were best exhibited in his class lectures, the major portion of these chapters is devoted to a consideration of his original lecture manuscripts.

1. In August, 1908, Dods resigned his Chair because of ill-health. However, no one was immediately elected to fill this vacancy and he was considered, even in the College Calendar, as Professor of New Testament Exegesis until his death on April 26, 1909.

I. DODS' ENTRY INTO THE PROFESSORSHIP

Theological Trends Relating to New Testament Scholarship.

The fifty year period leading up to 1889 was one of rapid and profound change. Every department of human thought and activity felt the touch of new influences. Domestic life, commerce, art, literature, medicine, and education were improved by new methods. Machinery was performing many new wonders and showing its ability to revolutionize both agriculture and industry. What produced and governed all these changes was the application of scientific methods¹ to all human thought and action. There was an intensified search for reality. Men refused to build on premises they could not test. They desired to ascertain the actual facts and to accept only what they knew to be true. Nothing was left unquestioned and untested, not even theology. It was not only the Bible which was thrown into the crucible, but every theory concerning the Bible was also sifted and tried. Some people feared that, in the process, damage would be done to the Bible, but as Dods and others realized, "free criticism and free discussion form the only path to truth."² One of the writers who best understood the trend in theology in the nineteenth century set forth the benefits of the new movement.

The nineteenth century...exhibits a confluence of various streams, issuing in a complexity of ideas, a fascinating yet confusing absence of uniformity, which is very unlike the theology of three hundred years ago, but on the other hand recalls the life of the early Church. In the Patristic era, if a divine was orthodox on the Person of Christ he received, or at all events he claimed, a certain

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1. That is, the ascertainment of exact knowledge and the application of that knowledge.
 2. Dods, Recent Progress in Theology (Edinburgh: Macniven and Wallace, 1889), p. 11.

latitude with regard to some other doctrinal topics, such as the atonement or eschatology. By degrees this freedom was withdrawn; in the Middle Ages tradition had more than begun to weave its bonds; and by the seventeenth century both Roman and Protestant writers had become pretty closely tied up by the detail of their creeds. The difference is clear once the nineteenth century has begun. For the last three or four generations men have been working out fresh interpretations. The result has in some good ways been to quicken interest and banish stagnation.¹

Throughout the whole domain of theology the scientific spirit, the spirit that seeks for ascertained fact, led men to be more on their guard against mistaking formulae and phrases for truth and fact, and led them to test theological doctrine by the realities of human experience and the actual conditions and laws of human life.

New Testament studies. In no department of theology was the progress more apparent and more fruitful than in New Testament studies. The half-century prior to 1889 had done more to promote the understanding of the New Testament than almost all the other Christian half-centuries put together.² During those fifty years many of the finest minds in Europe were devoted to the ascertainment of the origin and history, the inter-relation, the actual text, and the true meaning and contents of the books which constitute the New Testament. Thousands of volumes were written embodying the results of the life-long investigations of scholars thoroughly equipped for their work, and in the main

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1. Hugh R. Mackintosh, Types of Modern Theology (London: Nisbet and Co. Ltd., 1937), p. 1.
 2. Professor W.T. Davison, "Inspiration and Biblical Criticism," The Expository Times, 2:173, May, 1891. See also article by Professor W.M. Macgregor, Missionary Record, June, 1909.

guided not by a desire to find what suited their own predilections and suppositions, but the actual facts.

The area of textual criticism saw remarkable progress. At the turn of the nineteenth century the Christian public possessed no reliable edition of the Greek Testament. The Textus Receptus, largely haphazard, was formed with insufficient material and on no clearly conceived and thoroughly applied principle. But in 1842 Charles Lachmann's larger edition appeared, indicating the value of going back to the oldest authorities. The first fruits of Tischendorf's critical studies were published in 1840 and his first edition of the Greek Testament in 1841. Samuel Prideaux Tregelles, a life-long friend of Tischendorf, did even more than the German scholar to establish the true principles of criticism. Westcott and Hort, by working out the genealogical classification of manuscripts and by establishing the relations of external and internal evidence and other principles, placed the keystone in the arch which had been rising by the labors of former scholars.

Interpretation of Scripture was immediately affected. The gain in interpretation consisted not in the mere multiplication of books, but in the new methods, the new ideas, and the new resources used by the interpreter. In his startling essay of 1860¹ Jowett set forth the principles of interpretation which were universally adopted in less than a quarter of a century. Jowett's main contention was that Scripture, like other books,

1. "On the Interpretation of Scripture" in Essays and Reviews. Referred to on p. 16, The Authority of Scripture by J.K.S. Reid.

"has one meaning which is to be gathered from itself without reference to the adaptations of fathers and divines, and without regard to a priori notions about its nature and origin. It is to be interpreted like other books, with attention to the character of its authors, and the prevailing state of civilization and knowledge, with allowance for peculiarities of style and language, and modes of thought and figures of speech."¹ The disturbance and suspicion aroused by this essay indicated that at the date of its publication many Christian people in Britain still held the "mechanical" theory of inspiration, which taught that the writers of Scripture were the mere pens of the Holy Spirit;² a theory which Westcott, Farrar, Dods and others denounced as at variance with the whole form and fashion of the Bible. But many of those who held the old theories of inspiration were slow to relinquish their opinions.³ This refusal to accept a more scientific and defensible theory had far reaching effects. The Church in Britain began to lose its hold on multitudes of men, especially in great cities. Many laymen were "persuaded to believe that the Church is a hostile and organised hypocrisy," observed Archdeacon Farrar.⁴

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1. Quoted by Dods, Recent Progress in Theology, pp. 28-29. See also O. Pfleiderer, The Development of Theology in Germany Since Kant and its Progress in Great Britain Since 1825, (Third edition, London: Swan Sonnenschein & Co., Ltd., 1909), p. 387.
 2. "Inspiration," A Dictionary of Christ and the Gospels, ed. James Hastings, (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1906), I, p. 833.
 3. The mechanical theory was also called "theory of verbal inspiration" and the "dictation theory." See Ibid.
 4. F.W. Farrar, The Bible: Its Meaning and Supremacy, (second edition; London: Longmans, Green, and Co., 1901), p. 2.

No one can take up a book or newspaper which contains the arguments of sceptics without seeing that nine-tenths of their case is made up of attacks upon the Bible. They seem to think that if they hold up to ridicule this or that narrative, almost invariably of the Old Testament, they have demonstrated the futility of the Christian religion.¹

Farrar ultimately concluded that no conception more subversive of Scriptural authority had ever been devised than the assertion that in the Bible we must accept everything or nothing. Similarly Dods, in the most forceful words at his disposal, denounced the theory of verbal inspiration which he felt had made the Bible an offence to honest men and had turned enquirers into sceptics by the thousand.²

With an equal sense of mission, other scholars set out conclusively to dispose of the theory of verbal inspiration. In spite of the resulting unrest and upheaval, this was the beginning of a better day in which the interpreter no longer trammelled by an untenable theory, was able to open his eyes to the actual facts of Scripture, to let it speak out its own meaning, and to understand it in the light of the writers' circumstances and opportunities.

1. Ibid., p. 7.

2. See Chapter III, p. 163 of this thesis. Of course the rise in scepticism was also caused by other factors. Physical science by its extraordinary conquests had put men into possession of truths regarding the world and its laws which to a considerable extent altered men's conception of nature as a whole. "In the theory of evolution, as Darwin himself was careful to point out in his book of 1860, there is nothing that necessarily excludes the agency of a personal Creator; but as that theory, at any rate, removes God's creative agency to an immeasurable distance in the past...the natural, if illogical, consequence is that nature is thought of as self-evolving and self-regulating. The agency of nature in evolving and preserving living forms is so efficient, so wonderful, so open to observation, that it tends to occupy the mind to the exclusion of any radical originating cause." The Expositor, 8:297, 1888.

Biblical Criticism. In Biblical Criticism also rapid advance was made during the nineteenth century. After the appearance of Strauss' Leben Jesu in 1835, the books of the New Testament were made the subject of ceaseless and keen criticism.¹ In the same year appeared the first important critical work by Ferdinand Christian Baur, who became recognized by all schools of critics as the man who opened a new era in the history of their science. His method was the method of historical criticism. He it was who first made it the problem of criticism to assign to each book of the New Testament its place in the history of the development of primitive Christianity, to determine the causes to which it owed its origin, the object at which it aimed, and the views it represented. Although his conclusions were often wrong, and his own disciples abandoned many of his most important positions, he still stands at the head of the science because he introduced a new method, or if he did not introduce it, he yet gained currency for it by the brilliant use he made of it and the daring conclusions he reached.

By 1889, the storm which threatened to blow the New Testament into pieces had spent its force, and the New Testament had emerged unharmed. The permanent gain which the New Testament student derived from the long investigations of that fifty year period was the satisfaction of knowing not merely that he could freely trust the Bible, but also that he had the use of a new instrument of knowledge which would never become obsolete. That instrument

1. V.F. Storr, The Development of English Theology in the Nineteenth Century 1800-1860 (London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1913), pp. 168ff.

was historical criticism--a criticism which finds a place and a raison d'être for each writing in the history of the period to which it belongs, and which places each in that particular stage of development to which its contents testify. Also those years of intense investigation produced a higher standard of scholarship, for in order to demonstrate the insufficiency of the plausible and scholarly conclusions of Baur, scholarship as exact and criticism as searching were required. Consequently, the latter half of the nineteenth century saw the books of the New Testament examined with microscopic minuteness. Every possible theory was canvassed in the public debating ground of European criticism, and nothing was allowed to stand which was not thoroughly well-grounded in ascertained facts.¹ The result was that the authenticity of the New Testament books was soon more firmly and intelligently held than ever. For example, criticism, instead of shaking the Church's faith in the genuineness of Paul's epistles, enabled the Church, as never before, to apprehend their origin and significance, and to understand why they belong to Paul and could belong to no one else.

Probably no minister in Scotland was better prepared than Dods to lead divinity students into an understanding of the benefits of criticism and an appreciation of the need for continued diligent study of the New Testament. His own understanding and appreciation were partially revealed in the closing words of his Inaugural Lecture.

1. Hugh R. Mackintosh, op. cit., p. 4.

I shall be forgiven by those who labour in other departments of theology if I say that there is no study which so rapidly repays the toil spent upon it, none in which the methods are more scientific, and the results more certain. The New Testament is a mine out of which the gold has not all been brought to the surface, nor all sifted and refined. Much has been quarried and made current, in which the least original scholar may rejoice, and by which he may largely profit. But there remains much to be done, and of a kind which may well attract the energies and resources of the most ambitious mind. It is there he can get rid of all that has overlaid the figure of the Lord and see Him face to face. It is there he can learn from the lips of Christ Himself the gospel he has to preach; and by living through the same scenes and breathing the same air with Him, come at length to understand His purposes and enter into His spirit.¹

His Qualifications For The Chair.

Only a brief consideration of Dods' qualifications is necessary in order to understand why he was elected to the Chair of New Testament Exegesis on the first ballot cast by the General Assembly of 1889. Throughout the twenty-five years of his ministry in Glasgow he had distinguished himself as a sound scholar and a man of unusual industry. His wide reading and his prodigious literary output were a constant amazement to those acquainted with the other work he was doing as the pastor of a growing, influential city church. By means of his books and articles in religious journals he became known throughout the English speaking world as one of the finest interpreters of Scripture to his generation.² Professor Hugh R. Mackintosh expressed the opinion "that as a continuous expositor of Scripture

1. Dods, Recent Progress in Theology, p. 37.

2. "The consensus of opinion was that his books of expositions of Scripture were rich in scholarship, insight, and sense." Eastern Daily Press, Norwich, May 3, 1909.

Dr. Dods had no living equal."¹

Amid the stirring revolution of nineteenth century religious thought Dods' keen and well-disciplined intellect enabled him to have an "exceptionally clear eye for the real issue."² Fellow ministers found it delightful to have Dods spend an hour or two in their manses, for they could always learn from him something of the current state of opinion and thought in the religious and philosophical world.³ Principal Iverach of Aberdeen, a friend of Dods' for more than thirty years, stated that his "sympathies with the theological world were exceedingly great, and his estimate of what directions the work of the church in the theological world should take was very accurate, indeed."⁴ His vast up-to-date knowledge of theological trends was partly the result of his work as critic and reviewer of books for the British Weekly, the Critical Review, The Expositor, and other periodicals. For example, from 1885 to 1902 he reviewed for The Expositor all the most recent English Literature on the New Testament as well as many volumes in French and German.⁵ In addition, his aptitude in Greek and Latin, his detailed knowledge of Patristic writings, and his grasp of history and literature gave him a broad background from which to formulate his opinions on current issues.⁶

1. British Weekly, April 29, 1909.

2. Glasgow Herald, April 29, 1909.

3. Aberdeen Journal, April 27, 1909.

4. Aberdeen Journal, April 27, 1909.

5. In the year 1889 he reviewed thirty-two books for The Expositor alone. See Vol. IX: 75-80, 316-7; Vol. X:465-72.

6. Reading Greek was Dods' favorite past-time. This fact was disclosed in a letter to Professor Blackie, 4 January 1886. Blackie Letters 1885-6, National Library of Scotland, MS 2636, Fol. 139. ✓

Thus, before Dods ever entered upon his professorship he had become one of the most respected scholars in Scotland. This influence he exerted by the massive strength of his comprehensive mind, his thorough mastery of his subject, his honesty, sincerity, and soundness of judgment. No one of his day had done more to combine the wide and liberal outlook of modern scholarship with loyalty of faith and devoutness of spirit.¹

His Purpose and Plan in Teaching.

In his "Closing Address for Bala Theological College" in 1898, Dods told the departing students that "the purpose of theological as of all training is not so much indoctrination as education, not to fill the mind with truth but rather to fit it for the ascertainment of truth."² Having lived most of his life in a turbulent period of extraordinary change, he clearly recognized the inherent danger of giving a theological student facts only, without having trained him to know from whence the facts came and how other similar facts could be derived. Consequently, his motive in teaching was always to train a man to think for himself. He tersely expressed this idea in a letter of 1903, "In this age the main task of a teacher is not to feed the open mind with ascertained truths (whose number is infinitesimal), but to open the mind and stir inquiry."³ In his own department of New Testament Exegesis, his main purpose was to prepare the student to study intelligently each New Testament writer and ascertain where he stood historically, under what influences

1. Christian Globe, April 29, 1909.

2. Dods, Lecture MS., "Closing Address for Bala Theological College, 1898," p. 1.

3. Later Letters, pp. 94-5.

he had formed his opinions and moulded his expression, in what he was involved, with whom he was connected and why the special aspect of truth which he presented necessarily occupied his mind.¹

The plan he adopted covered a two year period since the students who attended New College for four years sat under Dods only in their second and third years.² The course of study in the Junior Exegetical Class included a short course of lectures on the Canon of the New Testament; a few lectures on New Testament Greek and on the relation of the Synoptic Gospels; a longer course on Christ's Teaching, and an exposition of about one-half of the Gospel of John. One day each week the Class read Tischendorf's Synopsis Evangelica; and for Textual Criticism, Hammond's Outlines was used. In the Senior Exegetical Class the Catholic Epistles and the shorter Epistles of Paul were read by the class. The Epistle to the Galatians and the Epistle to the Hebrews were expounded with a constant regard to the Greek text. A course of lectures was given on the Theology of the Catholic Epistles, and on the Theology of Paul; and the Class was examined on Introduction with the help of a text-book.³ To these were added through the years many supplementary lectures of equal importance, such as his courses on the History of

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1. Dods, Lecture MS., "Teaching of Jesus I," p. 1.
 2. He called the second year men "Juniors" because they took his Junior courses; the third year men, who took his advanced courses were called "Seniors." The College Calendar For the Free Church of Scotland 1891-92, p. 25.
 3. Ibid.

Criticism, New Testament Background, the Science of Religion, the Egyptian Papyri, and others.

Attention will now be directed to three different types of courses taught by Dods: courses on background information, on exegesis, and on New Testament theology. Information for this study has been drawn primarily from his original manuscript lectures.¹

II. COURSES CONTAINING BACKGROUND INFORMATION.

History of Criticism.

There are many pitfalls into which a young inexperienced exegete may fall if he is not forewarned of them and made to understand the undesirable results which accompany certain methods of interpretation. The students who sat under Dods were given a comprehensive account of the history of criticism so that they could judge for themselves what were acceptable and what were unacceptable methods of interpretation of Scripture. Dods was especially eager that they should appreciate the fact that "the merit of interpretation in modern times is that it

1. The term "Lecture MS." as used in the ensuing footnotes does not indicate the material presented in one hour. For example, the manuscript lecture "History of Criticism II" probably occupied four or five class hours. The term "Lecture MS." used in reference to Dods' New College courses more accurately refers to a unit or section of the material covered in a course.

seeks to understand the Bible in the sense in which its writers understood it. Only now is it being allowed to say just what ^{t/} is meant. It has taken centuries to attain to what seems the obvious and simple method."¹ The salient features of these lectures were his explanations of (1) how and why the various methods of interpretation were used during different periods of history, (2) how the theory of verbal inerrancy gained acceptance and the effects this theory had upon the church, and (3) the part German critics played in bringing into vogue a more scientific approach to New Testament studies.

Using a chronological approach, Dods divided his course into five major sections: I Allegorical Method, II 1750--Hegel, III Schleiermacher-Strauss, IV Strauss-Baur, V Development of Biblical Interpretation in Britain in the seventeenth, eighteenth, and nineteenth centuries. He was never satisfied to give just the bare outline of the history of criticism, because he wanted his students to see why things developed as they did. This always called for additional background information and a resumé of the lives of

1. Dods, Lecture MS., "History of Criticism IV," p. 2.

the major figures in each era. For example, in his opening lecture, which dealt with the allegorical method as the first method of interpretation prevalent in the Church, he gave all the reasons why it gained in popularity, and also presented a brief life sketch of each outstanding man who made use of it or refuted it.

Charity, understanding, and sympathy marked these historical lectures just as they did his expository courses. After showing how the allegorical method¹ continued to be used until it was matured, strengthened and advocated as the only worthy interpretation by the School of Alexandria, of which Clement and Origen were a part, Dods was quick to add that some allowance must be made for the men of that school in consideration of the state of things they found themselves called to combat. The anthropomorphisms of the Old Testament ("God's eye," "God's hand," etc.) were taken literally and gave rise to fantastic notions of God. In fact, the Old Testament formed a great stumbling-block

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1. Sometimes the words of Scriptures are meant to be taken in a metaphorical sense, but when allegorizing is spoken of in connection with exegesis, that method of interpretation is meant which without defensible or demonstrable ground treats a passage as figurative and instead of the proper sense of the words, imposes upon them an improper and spiritual sense.

to many. Allegory, on the other hand, presented a convenient back-door by which escape could be found from all the difficulties of Scripture.¹

It was a most welcome change which was introduced by the great School of Antioch,² which included such men as Lucian of ^{o/a} Samasota, Dorotheus, Diodorus, Chrysostom, and Theodore of Mopsuestia. Under Theodore's influence a strong emphasis was placed on the literalistic method of interpretation to the total neglect of the allegorical. Chrysostom favored a less radical approach. Dods made this an occasion to praise Chrysostom as being among the first to use the historical method of interpretation. Chrysostom recognized the cognate principle that revelation in its substance must adapt itself to the stage of growth and receptiveness which has been reached by those to whom it is given. Speaking of the common duties of life as regulated under the Old Testament, he said that "in condescension to our weakness God lowers his revelation from a perfect to an inferior standard." "God desiring to uproot greater evils permitted the less." "He suffered what He did not desire that He might secure that which He did desire."³ Thus, he saw that Scripture cannot be interpreted as if it had all been written at once and irrespective of any stage of human development. He saw that if a

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1. In the account of Abraham's sacrifice of Isaac, Clement saw only a mystical meaning; the three days' journey of the tortured father points to the progressive advancement of the human mind towards the comprehension of the ideal universe. Dods, Lecture MS., "History of Criticism I," p. 7.
 2. F.W. Farrar named Diodorus of Tarsus as the founder of this school but Dods preferred to say that Dorotheus and Lucian were its founders. See F.W. Farrar, History of Interpretation (London: Macmillan and Co., 1886), p. 212.
 3. Dods, Lecture MS., "History of Criticism I," p. 16.

right judgement is to be passed on any part of Scripture, consideration must be given to the time of its deliverance and the circumstances of those to whom it was delivered. And he saw further, that the education of the race must be gradual and the revelation of which Scripture is the record must also be gradual.¹

The main point Dods wished to make in his elaborate treatment of Chrysostom was the fact that the apprehension of the historical method (which Dods favored and stressed) enabled Chrysostom to dispense with the allegorical. He no longer needed to affirm that the imperfections in the conduct of the patriarchs were to be explained mystically and were not to be taken in the literal sense, because now he apprehended the real solution, that these men were at a different and lower stage and that the revelation accorded to them cannot be judged by the perfect revelation of the Gospel.²

As time went on and as scholarship in the Middle Ages gave place to scholastic philosophy, a reaction set in against this beginning of historical interpretation. In the absence of linguistic study and historical sense, a free field was left to the dogmatist who used Scripture merely to prove his own position; and where this could not be accomplished if the literal sense was adhered to, a spiritual sense was imposed on the words.³

1. Ibid.

2. When Dods made similar statements in his 1877 sermon "Revelation and Inspiration," and in his 1888 address to the Pan-Presbyterian Council, he ignited heated controversies in the Free Church. See Chapter III, pp.161-2.

3. Thus, "St. Gregory, in his Moralia, found in the Book of Job his own theory of Church and Sacraments together with a condemnation of all the heresies he wished to refute." Dods, Lecture MS., "History of Criticism I," p. 18.

From this point the students were led to see the importance of language study and historical background by observing the unfortunate results brought about by those who worked without them.

Post-Reformation. At the Reformation¹ the literal sense seemed likely to come into its own; and for a time in the hands of such interpreters as Erasmus, Calvin and Beza, it did so. But after the Reformation those who rigidly adhered to this method, as Grotius and Limborch, were accused of denying the typical reference of the Old Testament--a wholly unjust accusation but which had the result of producing in the church a suspicion of the literal method as cold and barren. The great representative of this reaction was Cocceius who became conspicuous as the advocate and promoter of the mystical interpretation of Scripture. This method also received an impulse from the spiritual mystics like Paracelsus, Böhme, and Swedenborg. "And so interpreters continued to deal with Scripture according to their own sagacity," explained Dods, "without coming to any common understanding on the subject."² Furthermore, he warned that the same undesirable method of interpretation was still used in Britain during the late nineteenth century.

In our own country it has been left to the good taste and common sense of the individual to determine in what instances and how far he will apply the mystical interpretation. So that even in our own day men of repute are not ashamed to avow themselves advocates of this system. Newman goes so far as to say that "it may be almost laid

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1. The Reformation period was covered in his lectures on the Canon, not in this course on the History of Criticism.
 2. Dods, Lecture MS., "History of Criticism I," p. 19.

down as an historical fact that the mystical interpretation and orthodoxy will stand or fall together." And in Tract 89, written by Keble, we read, "One is tempted to remark how much we may lose by the cold and dry way in which we are apt to read the sacred history as mere matter of criticism, historical or moral, contrasted with the high and thrilling views wherewith the ecclesiastical rules of interpretation reward those who fairly adopt them."¹

He then cautioned his students to remember that allegorizing was far from being extinct. The stumbling-block afforded by the Old Testament immoralities and anthropomorphisms were no longer tripping up scholars, but all nineteenth century stumbling-blocks were not yet removed from Scripture. The miracles of the New Testament were still offending many, and the same method for their removal was being employed which played so large a part in the patristic church.²

Another influence was at work in the nineteenth century tending to the allegorizing of Scripture. He called the attention of his students to the view taken by the mystics who believed that beyond the obvious sense of Scripture there is often a second sense. Passages that seemed to be history they read as parable and allegory. Dods acknowledged that there is a sense in which this is proper. The narrator of an incident may not see its whole significance, nor all its applications. But the only legitimate

1. Ibid.

2. E.g. Principal James Drummond, in his book on An Inquiry Into The Character and Authorship of the Fourth Gospel (London: Williams & Norgate, 1903) adopted Origen's view that the spiritual was more highly valued by the writer than physical fact. Thus of the narrative which recounts the raising of Lazarus he says: "If it be designed to set forth in a vivid and picturesque form the truth that Jesus is the resurrection and the life, and by his commanding spiritual authority raised the dead from the grave of moral corruption, and released them from the stifling grasp of Pharisaic teaching, then history returns in a new guise." Thus by the same old device, offence was removed from the narratives of John. Ibid., p. 20.

way to reach these meanings is through the actual history and its record. The prophet with his eye on his own day may not descry some far fuller meaning his words will receive when applied to persons and events belonging to subsequent ages. But this does not give a license to the fancy of every interpreter, nor admit of our rescuing documents from the charge of sensuality by putting upon them spiritual meanings. That is but the medicinal treatment of Homer and the old mythology over again.¹

Dods concluded this section with the following advice:

From the allegorizers, then, we get our first lesson in Interpretation and roughly speaking, it is this: Do not be too ingenious and do not force your own meanings on Scripture. Let it tell its own tale. In preaching on Old Testament immoralities such as the fall of Noah or Lot, or the slaughter of the Canaanites and the priests of Baal, you will penetrate more deeply into human life and more effectually stir the conscience by taking the narrative in its plain and literal sense than by foisting upon it mystic meanings which are really evasions or distortions of Scripture.²

In the General Assembly of 1889, the primary objection to Dods' election to the chair of New Testament Exegesis was his view of inspiration. Some of the factors which shaped his opinion revealed themselves in the second section of his lectures on the History of Criticism.

Early in the seventeenth century the followers of the Reformers departed from the bold and true view of Scripture which was inculcated by the leaders of that movement. Unfortunately, they fell into the snare of attempting to set up over against the authority of the Papal chair an authority which should be as final and as infallible. This they believed they found in Scripture. They assumed that an authority to which they could

1. Dods, Lecture MS., "History of Criticism I", p. 20.

2. Ibid., p. 21.

refer all gainsayers must be an authority infallible in all its parts; a literal, verbal authority.¹ The immediate result was lamentable. Erroneous ideas of revelation and inspiration led Calvius and others of his type in the seventeenth century to confound the teaching of the Old and New Testaments, and to find in the Old Testament not merely the germs of the New but fully developed Christian doctrine.²

The extravagances of these men could not fail to provoke reaction. The reaction was widespread and gave rise to an interest in Arminianism³ and Pietism.⁴ A third phase of the reaction against the merely dogmatic use of the Bible was of special

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1. The extreme consequence of this procedure was reached when the Wittenberg faculty in 1638 decreed that to speak of barbarisms and solecisms in the Greek of the New Testament would be a blasphemy against the Holy Ghost. Calvius declared it to be impious and profane audacity to change a single point in the Word of God and to substitute a smooth breathing for a rough or a rough for a smooth. Dods, Lecture MS., "History of Criticism II," p. 1.
 2. Hence, they perverted prophecy and by forced interpretations of Old Testament passages found support for the main doctrines of Christianity. E.g., Grotius, having rightly asserted that the triple occurrence of the word "holy" in Isaiah 6:3 was not a proof of the Trinity but only a solemn repetition, Calvius upbraided him and said he ought to have given ear to the Holy Ghost rather than to unbelieving Jews. (Farrar spelled Calvius's name on some occasions "Calov" and on others "Calovius". See pp. 364-366 History of Interpretation.)
 3. The leading names associated with Arminian interpretation were Arminius, Episcopius, Grotius, Limborch, Clericus, and Wetstein.
 4. One of the aims of Spener, a leading Pietist, was to bring the people into contact with the living spirit of the Bible. He perceived how its use as a text book of doctrine had disguised its primary purpose of serving as a book of edification. Dods said the most outstanding Pietist was John Albert Bengel, whose Grammar of the New Testament "is certainly the most conspicuous monument of scholarship and insight which the church possesses. It has probably been more used and more enjoyed than any other single work on the New Testament and it is bound to be used so long as the New Testament is read. It stands so entirely by itself and its merits are so individual that it cannot possibly be superseded." Dods, Lecture MS., "History of Criticism II," p. 2.

significance to Dods. This feature of the reaction was visible in the number of scholars who were wearied of theological debate and took no part in it, but who yet valued Scripture and began to work upon its more external features (i.e. its text, language, history, etc.). Dods laid great stress upon the work of these men, explaining that Biblical science was indebted to them not only for the actual results obtained by their study, but even more for turning the thoughts of men to a fresh treatment of Scripture and a new department of Biblical study.

Unconsciously they became the founders of the historical method. They brought into prominence the necessity of carefully investigating the language, the circumstances, the entire external relations in which each part of Scripture was written. They also laid down the material so that when the builders of modern exegesis arrived they found the heaviest part of their task already accomplished.¹

This seventeenth century reaction, fruitful as it was, failed to put the Biblical student in possession either of the knowledge or the spirit requisite for successful Biblical study. But in Germany in the eighteenth century there was in progress a characteristically German movement towards greater freedom and accuracy in Biblical science. This movement, however, was so implicated with literary and philosophical influences that Dods felt compelled to pay more than a passing regard to these influences in order that his students could properly understand their own century. Also, he took the time to give a brief life sketch of each significant German scholar of that period. In this way each man's work could be understood in relation to his

1. Dods, Lecture MS., "History of Criticism II," p. 4. Among them were Casaubon, Scaliger, Hunnius, Bos, Raphellius, Schultens, Doughty, and Lightfoot.

circumstances and to the outside influences upon his life.¹

Among the more outstanding men were Eichhorn, Semler, Lessing and Reimarus. In Eichhorn there was plainly visible the transition from the superficial criticism of Christianity which characterized the eighteenth century to the learned rationalism of the nineteenth. "In Eichhorn, one sees the end of that criticism of Christianity which has ascribed it to fraud or charlatanry and the beginning of a more plausible though equally baseless criticism which ascribes it to mistake."² Semler, Lessing and Reimarus were the most instrumental in altering the character of Biblical study and in turning the stream of criticism into new channels.

Semler. Semler, combining complete critical freedom with a devout spirit, discerned the worth of individual manuscripts by means not of their age and beauty but of their readings. He also did something to educate the public mind and familiarize it with the idea of textual criticism by explicitly repudiating the notion that a special providence had presided over the transmission of the New Testament text to preserve its purity, and by plainly declaring that it had been exposed to the same hazards and blunders of copyists as Plato and Horace. In his book Free Investigations of the Canon, published in 1771, he opened the door to the freest criticism by calling attention to the fact³ that the Canon was not

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1. His remarks about Ernesti who died in 1781 reminded his students of the changes which Dods brought to New College in 1889. For up until that date Ernesti's useful but out dated book on the institutes of interpretation was used as a text-book by Professor Smeaton. See The College Calendar for the Free Church of Scotland, 1889-1890, p. 25. Also Dods, Lecture MS., "History of Criticism II, pp. 6, 9. J.A. Ernesti, Principles of Biblical Interpretation, trans. from the Institutio Interpretis by Charles Terret (Edinburgh: Thomas Clark, 1832.)
 2. Dods, Lecture MS., "History of Criticism II," p. 5.
 3. As did Dods in his book, The Bible: Its Nature and Origin.

given complete to the Church by a miracle but was gradually formed under human influences and in a manner which history can trace, and that the truth about the Canon, like any other historical truth, can only be ascertained by study.¹

Dods' own appreciation of Semler's contribution to New Testament scholarship was especially evident in his explanation of Semler's principles of interpretation.

It was the merit of Semler that he laid hold of and enounced this fundamental law of interpretation that the Scripture must be interpreted in connection with the time and circumstances which evoked the words. He thus gave the death-blow to the pernicious custom of lifting a few words out of their context and, in neglect of their real meaning as determined by their original application, employing them to serve some wholly different purpose.²

This merit Semler shared with Wetstein who, shortly before, had declared that for all sufficient exposition of the New Testament it was necessary to understand the position of those whom the Apostles addressed, to have in view the time and place, the custom and usages and modes of thought, the proverbs and metaphors and phraseology of the people who first read them.

This is a commonplace of New Testament study in our time. All honour therefore to the men who first gave it currency. With all his deficiencies--deficiencies inseparable from pioneering--Semler clearly saw that if we are to be true to the writers of the New Testament and allow them to utter to us their very meaning, we must put ourselves back into their circumstances and endeavour to understand them as they meant to be understood. This was the first sure step towards historical criticism, a step which, once taken, could never be withdrawn.³

1. Dods, Lecture MS., "History of Criticism II," p. 8.

2. Ibid., p. 9.

3. Ibid., p. 10. Dods strongly believed in this approach to interpretation and was grateful to those who popularized it.

Of course, Dods saw Semler's weaknesses¹ and brought them to the attention of his students, but in a manner unlike that of his predecessor, Professor Smeaton, who was opposed to unrestricted critical freedom.² Even when he differed from their conclusions Dods had a genuine appreciation for the work done by German scholars because he knew the value of the method. "Criticism is, after all, merely reading with care and with the means of understanding what is read. It is to read with scrutiny of every word or phrase, and with the endeavour to account for every word and phrase, and bring all that is read into a consistent whole." Even if all criticism was not earnest and wise, yet that did not discredit criticism. "If criticism err," he reasoned, "we cannot appeal from criticism to something else, but only from criticism tentative and immature to criticism mature and final."³ "No one

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1. Semler was entangled in the idea that "the Bible was first and foremost an ethical manual and that revelation was above all else a revelation of doctrine." He also displayed a certain slovenliness of mind and careless inaccuracy." Ibid., pp. 11-12.
 2. Smeaton spoke from his experience of more than forty years' reading of the higher critics: "Are not the theories without any basis of solid historical fact? and what is the worth of such theories where the basis is mere conjecture or petty internal criticism leading to arbitrary conclusions? I hope your mind will soon revolt from this castle-building in the clouds...We, as professors, are not appointed by the Church to teach what tends to shake the faith of any, or to advocate a criticism which is not legitimate." Excerpts from a letter to Robertson Smith quoted by Black and Chrystal, op. cit., p. 200.
 3. Dods, Recent Progress in Theology, pp. 10-11. In contrast to Dods' appreciation of the value of free criticism, Smeaton believed that the Church should exercise its authority in order to keep criticism within proper limits. In 1877 when the College Committee reported that there was no cause for judicial action against Robertson Smith, Smeaton dissented from the report: "An attack on the genuineness and authority of the Scripture, whether dignified by the title of the higher criticism or prompted by the lower scepticism, ought never to be permitted within the Church on the part of any office-bearer. We can keep criticism within its proper limits, and this occasion may have been permitted to occur that we may show to other churches how we can act in the exercise of our independent jurisdiction." See p. 210, Black and Chrystal, op. cit.

did more than Semler to help the theological world towards maturity ...Religious movements have also their diseases of childhood. These are visible in Semler. Yet with all his incompleteness he accomplished a great work."¹

Lessing and Reimarus. In his lectures Dods clearly revealed his appreciation of Lessing and Reimarus. In contrast to that attitude which expected no good thing to come out of Germany, Dods' remarks on Lessing began in ways that were designed to create immediate respect and even admiration for Lessing.

No man ever lived with a more sincere desire to ascertain the truth, or better equipped for its discovery, or more bold and candid in its utterance. As a critic he is supreme. It is not difficult to find faults in his constructive work, but his acuteness, his profound penetration, his learning, his sanity of judgment, lent unrivalled force to his criticism. And it was criticism which above all else was needed in the 18th century.²

From this introduction, the New College Professor went on to give, to the best of his ability, an unprejudiced account of the life and work of Gotthold E. Lessing.

Lessing was brought into prominence by his publication of the Wolfenbüttel Fragments, written by Reimarus.³ The sensation these Fragments created was extraordinary. Thirty-two refutations of his thesis appeared in two years. Before Reimarus, no one had attempted to treat the life of Jesus historically. He, for the first time, brought Jesus into connection with the Messianic expectations of His people and endeavored to explain His beliefs

1. Dods, Lecture MS., "History of Criticism II," p. 11.

2. Ibid., p. 13.

3. When Reimarus died his daughter handed over to Lessing certain MSS. on which Reimarus had been engaged for some years. In 1777 Lessing issued a volume containing 5 fragments.

and His conduct with the help of the current beliefs. In other words, he treated His life historically. He brought it into solid connection with the development of the Jewish religion and people, if not with the progress of revelation. His enquiry was in the main the same as that of his time, and concerned rather what Jesus said and taught than what He was--but the manner in which he conducted this enquiry eventually led to the necessity of determining what Jesus was (although this end was not reached in his day).

His idea of the life of Jesus was simple enough. Jesus expected that in His life on earth the prophetic announcements of a messianic reign would be fulfilled. In sending out His delegates He assured them "Ye shall not have gone over the cities of Israel till the Son of Man be come." He never spoke to them of His death and resurrection. These sayings were inserted in the Gospels after the events. But when the crucifixion nullified the prophetic idea of the Messiah, the disciples fell back upon the apocalyptic idea of a second Advent, stole the body of Jesus and declared that He had risen and was alive. Christianity rests on a deception, and a deception of a somewhat gross sort. "Still," declared Dods, "this was quite a new method of treating the Life of our Lord and introduced the application of historical criticism to the Gospel narratives--a method of enquiry which has ever since prevailed and must continue always to be used." "And as we shall afterwards see it is this same problem regarding the eschatological view of our Lord which is still in our own day occupying critics."¹

1. Dods, Lecture MS., "History of Criticism II," p. 16.

It was Lessing's merit that he at once saw the epoch-making character of the Fragments and secured their publication. Also, his criticism and comments on the Fragments were quite as valuable as the documents themselves. He gave expression to two ideas which have since his time very seriously affected belief in Christianity. The first was the distinction he made between the religion of Christ and the Christian religion. By the religion of Christ he meant the religion which Jesus as a man adopted and practised--his faith in God and his love for his fellowmen. By the Christian religion he meant the religion which has been identified with Christendom--faith in Christ as Divine, dependence upon the virtue of His work and the influence of His spirit. To Lessing it was only the religion of Christ which was admissible and credible. Of the other, the Christian religion, he made nothing; and to his mind the love of our fellowmen is the whole of religion. The other important idea of Lessing resulted from the first. Supposing, as he did, that Christianity was merely equivalent to the practice of love, and the general imitation of Christ, it was natural that he should rest its acceptance on the appeal it makes to man's moral instincts. Dods concluded his explanation of these ideas with a discussion of their weaknesses, in order that his students would have a proper perspective of Lessing's works.¹

The work by which Lessing was best known in Britain and which probably accomplished more than any other for the emancipating of European thought, was the small treatise on The Education of the

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1. Lessing's fundamental error, as Dods saw it, was his failure to perceive that what created the Christian Church was not acceptance of Christ's moral teaching, but the conviction, first uttered by Peter, that He is the Christ, the Messenger and Representative of God. Dods. Lecture MS., "History of Criticism II," p. 22.

Human Race.¹ It consisted of a hundred brief paragraphs which occupied only about sixteen pages in all; and it was published in its complete form in 1780, the year before his death. The purpose of this compact and substantial little work was to show that Revelation has been to the race what education is to the individual and that, especially, as the individual must learn what is elementary before he can understand the higher branches of learning, so God in the earliest times revealed to men only what they were then able to understand and appreciate and thus led them on step by step to higher and purer knowledge. The New Testament itself was only a step in the progress. In this way Lessing defended the Old Testament from the assaults of the unthinking sceptic. He showed the reasonableness of reserving such doctrines as that of immortality until the people should be capable of appreciating it, and he illustrated the steps by which they became convinced of the unity and supremacy of God. In a word, he expounded the progressive character of revelation. This was so new a thought to his contemporaries that it "dissolved the old parties, and emptied of meaning the old issues."² Unlike the rationalists, he found a place for revelation in the history of the race and from empty speculation turned the thoughts of men to the actual growth of the human mind in divine knowledge. "As a rough sketch in boldest outline of the progress of revelation,

1. G.E. Lessing, The Education of the Human Race, trans. F.W. Robertson (London: 1883).

2. Dods, Lecture MS., "History of Criticism II," p. 25.

nothing could have been more serviceable, although it merely put Paul's ideas in modern form."¹

But this outstanding work of Lessing, while it admirably fulfilled its purpose, was itself too deeply infected by the erroneous or at least imperfect ideas of its time, to be permanently helpful. "No where do we see more clearly than in this fine treatise, the consequence of viewing the Bible as itself the revelation, and not the record of it," Dods declared.²

The whole argument of Lessing proceeds upon the narrow and pedantic 18th century idea that the purpose of God in making a revelation was to teach men certain doctrine: to anticipate, by knowledge imparted from above, the workings of the human mind itself. That God Himself, redeeming men, was the subject or content of revelation was an idea Lessing had not grasped. Accordingly he missed the significance of Christ as the consummate revelation of God, and misapprehended the function and nature of the Bible.

But as Lessing himself taught, the world has to move step by step, and the step he took, though far from being the last to be taken in this direction, was a sound one: he marked once for all the Progressiveness of Revelation, introducing an idea which may be amended and more skillfully applied, but which goes no more out.³

Schleiermacher. Of Schleiermacher Dods said, "No man has more decisively influenced the theology of his country. He was a truly great man, intellectually and emotionally intense, and

1. Ibid., p. 27. "Every one who thinks out Paul's scheme of the philosophy of history comes upon the idea uttered by Lessing that the individual must pass through the experience of the race...In the moral life of the individual, he must begin, as the race began, with law, with commands and sanctions, and pass on to the higher stage when what is right is done because it is right, and because the developed manhood naturally pursues and loves righteousness."

2. Ibid., p. 28.

3. Dods, Lecture MS., "History of Criticism II," p. 28.

of the widest sympathies and most varied culture."¹ Although the influence of Schleiermacher was much more marked in the department of systematic theology, Dods felt that a few words of explanation regarding his relation to criticism were necessary. Schleiermacher once for all emancipated religion from thralldom to dogma,² and set it upon a new path by exhibiting it as quite a different thing from the acceptance of a creed or the performance of a ritual; to wit, the feeling of absolute dependence which is nothing else than communion with God. Schleiermacher presented religion as the finding of God in everything, and the faculty or habit of seeing all things in God. "This view of religion was the gateway to that freer and truer treatment of religion which has prevailed since Schleiermacher."³

The fresh impulse and new beginning which Schleiermacher succeeded in giving to thought about Christianity arose mainly from his bringing before the mind of the Christian, his relation to Christ and his relation to his fellow-Christians. Christianity is the religion not of those who subscribe to dogmas but of those who find redemption in Christ. This suggestion of Schleiermacher has been fraught with consequences of the utmost importance. It concentrated attention on the Person of Christ and gave an impulse to enquiry which produced a constant stream of studies always more

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1. Dods, Lecture MS., "History of Criticism III," p. 1.
 2. Dods was in sympathy with every movement away from a blind adherence to dogma. See his lecture on the Canon; and his public lecture in 1866 on "The Revelation of God in Scripture, Viewed in Respect both to Theological Science and to the Proper Use of Creeds," pp. 169-209 of Divine Revelation Explained and Vindicated (Glasgow: David Bryce & Co., 1866).
 3. Dods, Lecture MS., "History of Criticism III," p. 4.

and more profoundly penetrating the unsearchable wealth of that character and life. It simplified faith, disentangling it from difficult mental questions and concentrating it on the fact of Christ and His actual manifestation of God. It enabled men to grasp more clearly the peculiarity and essential distinction of Christianity, as the religion which redeems by bringing God actually into saving contact with men in the Person of Christ. Dods was keenly aware that at the end of the nineteenth century the force of this fresh view was by no means exhausted.

Schleiermacher's second achievement was his deliverance of Protestantism from the individualism which had settled upon it. He brought into prominence the idea of the Church and introduced into the Protestant mind the conviction that, though individuals, men are saved in connection with others and as parts of a great whole. The experience of consciousness of this whole became for him the criterion of Christian truth.

But it was on Schleiermacher's view of Scripture that Dods dwelt at length.

It is obvious that Schleiermacher's enthronement of the collective Christian consciousness as the last appeal in question of Christian truth must modify not only the doctrinal contents of his system but especially his conception of Scripture. And as his teaching on this point is intrinsically valuable and exercised a profound influence on subsequent belief and criticism, it may be well to present it with some fulness.¹

Schleiermacher presented several significant propositions. First, the high standing of Scripture cannot ground faith in Christ.

1. Ibid., p. 5.

This faith must be presupposed in order to attribute to Scripture a peculiar standing. Secondly, he maintained that the Scriptures of the New Testament are on the one hand the first member of a series of representations of Christian faith, and on the other hand are the norm of all succeeding representations. Furthermore, he held that the individual books of the New Testament were given by the Holy Spirit and the collection of the same was made under His guidance. Of special importance to Dods was Schleiermacher's distinction between revelation and inspiration.

He also guards his readers against confounding the terms "revelation" and "inspiration"; and against supposing that inspiration means that while the writers were engaged in composing their books they were lifted out of their ordinary state and found ideas communicated to them apart from the body of truth which they ordinarily held. All that they taught had its root in Christ and in Him all that is contained in the New Testament was first published, but not piecemeal according to the usual idea of inspiration, but as an indivisible, organically developed whole. And the teaching and writing of the Apostles was merely a participation in the revelation which was in Christ.¹

Strauss. The mythical theory of Strauss (published in 1835) came with so tremendous a shock upon the public mind and seemed so entirely to evacuate Christianity of all historical worth that Dods felt the need to examine it with some fulness. But there was another reason which led Dods to engage in an elaborate discussion of Strauss. In the decade prior to the twentieth century there were symptoms that the mythical theory was surviving and finding advocates in the school of Baur,

1. Ibid., p. 8. For this portion of his presentation of Schleiermacher, Dods drew much of his material from D. Carl Schwarz's book Zur Geschichte der Neuesten Theologie (Leipzig: F.A. Brockhaus, 1864.).

although Baur himself declared it had been rejected by every man of education in his day.¹

Strauss' Leben Jesu, Dods said, was a thorough-going attempt to construe the life of Christ consistently with the Hegelian philosophy. Hegelianism can admit of no interruptions in the ordinary course of nature--all is supernatural or nothing is supernatural. The life of Christ, therefore, must somehow be reduced to the ordinary level of nature. But how is this to be done in the face of the only original accounts we have of Christ, for they are full of the supernatural? The method adopted by Strauss was the ascription of mythical tendencies in those primitive times. It was not the actual facts, but facts unconsciously invented or embellished by the instincts of the Christian people, which those records embodied.²

By "myth" he did not simply mean the accretion of marvel to which every great historical personage is liable; but rather the unconscious representation in symbol or fact of the ideas of an age.³ The Gospel narratives represent as facts what are true as

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1. Pfleiderer and Holtzmann, two of the most influential critics in Germany, were advocating Strauss' theory. In fact, Pfleiderer greatly upset many in Scotland when he presented his views in the Gifford Lectures of 1894. Pfleiderer's views were immediately answered by Principal Robert Rainy, Professor James Orr, and Professor Dods, whose lectures were published together under the title The Supernatural in Christianity (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1894.)
 2. Dods, Lecture MS., "History of Criticism III," p. 13. See also Lecture MS., "Strauss," p. 5. Dods' first lecture on Strauss, entitled "Strauss," was later revised and enlarged and incorporated into his lectures on Schleiermacher and Baur.
 3. Dods had carefully studied the subject of Mythology and presented his findings in a lengthy lecture bearing the title "Mythology." See Lecture MS., "Mythology."

ideas, and they are represented as facts because in that way they are more easily apprehended. And it is not the supposed facts, therefore, which are valuable, but the ideas thus embodied and set forth. What is untrue as fact is true as idea; and the fact is narrated merely for the sake of the idea.¹

Strauss' own words reveal the ways in which he applied his theory.

This is the key to the whole of Christology, that, as subject of the predicate which the church assigns to Christ, we place, instead of an individual, an idea; but an idea which has an existence in reality, not in the mind only, like that of Kant. In an individual, a God-man, the properties and functions which the church ascribes to Christ contradict themselves; in the idea of the race, they perfectly agree. Humanity is the union of the two natures--God become man, the infinite manifesting itself in the finite, and the finite spirit remembering its infinitude; it is the child of the visible Mother and the invisible Father, Nature and Spirit; it is the worker of miracles, in so far as in the course of human history the spirit more and more completely subjugates nature, both within and around man, until it lies before him as the inert matter on which he exercises his active power; it is the sinless existence, for the course of its development is a blameless one, pollution cleaves to the individual only, and does not touch the race or its history. It is Humanity that dies, rises, and ascends to heaven, for from the negation of its phenomenal life there ever proceeds a higher spiritual life;...By faith in this Christ, especially in his death and resurrection, man is justified before God; that is, by the kindling within him of the idea of Humanity, the individual man participates in the divinely human life of the species.²

The commotion created by the appearance of Strauss' book was unprecedented. This was the result partly of its

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1. Dods, Lecture MS., "History of Criticism III," pp. 13-15. See also Lecture MS., "Strauss," pp. 6-7.
 2. David Friedrich Strauss, The Life of Jesus, trans. George Eliot (second edition; London: Swan Sonnenschein & Co., 1892), p. 780.

uncompromising thoroughness, partly of its perfection of style. It was at once and everywhere felt to be a great book. It was written with singular clearness and force. Its acuteness never failed and its learning made it a book for all times. But, as Dods demonstrated, its main contention could not be accepted. After revising his lectures through the years, Dods eventually arrived at six impressive reasons why Strauss' theory was not tenable.¹

(1) The objection which was at once felt, and which indeed Strauss himself anticipated, was that it ascribed to a literary and critical age a myth-forming faculty such as belongs only to a primitive age.² (2) Furthermore, myth and fancy cannot go on with its creations in the midst of an atmosphere of doubt and unfriendly scrutiny, and it is certain that in the first century there was a great deal of questioning and a great deal of opposition to the claims of Jesus.

(3) This theory proceeded upon the idea that the Messiah was expected to be a worker of miracles, and therefore after the death of Jesus miracles were freely ascribed to Him. But if during his life Jesus had wrought no miracles, how did He come to be acknowledged as the Messiah by persons who looked for a

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1. In his original treatment of Strauss he gave some reasons which were omitted in his revised lectures and his revised lectures contained reasons which did not appear in the earlier lecture.
 2. Here Dods cited various authorities to show that the myths were generally produced in an age which had no records, no philosophy, no criticism, no canon of belief and scarcely any tincture of astronomy or geography; but which on the other hand, was full of religious faith, distinguished for quick and susceptible imagination, seeing personal agents where we only look for objects and laws. The age in which Jesus lived was the very opposite of all this. Dods, Lecture MS., "History of Criticism III," pp. 19-21.

miracle-working Messiah?

(4) It is not denied that Jesus Himself claimed to work miracles. To Dods, this admission seemed to strike a fatal blow to the theory. "But to admit that He claimed to work miracles, and to maintain that He could not and did not, is to reduce the purest, truest being we know to the level of the common charlatan. His own claim seems to me to settle the question."¹

(5) The mythical theory must have been elaborated in forgetfulness of one of the most important factors in the origins of Christianity--the Apostle Paul. The miracles ascribed to Jesus are accounted for by the hero-worship of His followers. How are the miracles of Paul accounted for? A mythical theory is here impossible.

(6) The formation of myths requires some time, but between the death of Jesus and the writing of the gospels no very long time elapsed. This point was more fully treated by Dods in his public lecture on "The Trustworthiness of the Gospels" which was delivered in answer to statements made by Pfleiderer in his Gifford Lectures of 1894.²

Even before Dods became a professor, Strauss' theory had been invalidated by reasons similar, if not identical, to those given by Dods. Consequently, when Pfleiderer came to Scotland fifty-nine years after the appearance of Leben Jesu with an attempt to reproduce

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1. Dods, Lecture MS., "History of Criticism III," p. 22. See also p. 78 of The Supernatural in Christianity.
 2. Dods, Rainy, and Orr, The Supernatural in Christianity, pp. 79ff. Dods' lecture on "The Trustworthiness of the Gospels" is contained in this book, pp. 71-111.

Strauss, Dods was surprised by Pfleiderer's failure to realize that Biblical criticism had silenced his theory a generation earlier.

On learning Professor Pfleiderer's theory of the origin of the Gospels, the first feeling is one of disappointment. Has criticism, then actually not moved for sixty years? This is precisely nothing more nor less than the theory of Strauss, given to the world so long ago, and which was thought to have been slain and buried a generation ago. May not conservative criticism be excused if it exclaim, "This is John whom I beheaded." In the battle of Inkermann, after every repulse of the Russians, mass after mass of grey-coated obedience and fearlessness was hurled against the British position, but with no new disposition of force and no more adequate conception of the requirements of the attack. They did not know when they were defeated. So in these reiterated critical assaults without the slightest change of tactics, one sees stubbornness, gallantry, but also some bluntness of perception. "This is not war," we are tempted to say.¹

The publication of Strauss' Leben Jesu produced one good result. The attention of every theologian and critic in Europe was turned towards the life of Christ and studies on that life began to pour from the press. The reply which made the most impression on Strauss himself was Ullmann's, first published in 1836. Ullmann did not deny that here and there in the gospels the history might have been colored by what was mythical; he did deny that it was a just conclusion to draw that if all was not historical, all was mythical. He also pointed out that Strauss had neglected to estimate the testimony of Paul, a testimony which is unintelligible on the mythical theory. But chiefly he pressed on Strauss the dilemma: Did the church create Christ or did Christ create the Church? This indeed cut to the

1. Dods, Rainy, and Orr, The Supernatural in Christianity, p. 75.

heart of the whole matter. Ullmann also laid his finger on that defect in Strauss' work, the supplying of which gave a fresh impulse to the work of the next fifty years. He pointed out that Strauss had not based his criticism of the gospel history on any adequate investigation of these documents themselves; their date, origin, and authorship.

Baur. It was at this point that the powerful criticism of Baur struck in and established a new school very different in character and results from that of Strauss.

No one has more decisively turned the stream of thought than Ferdinand Christian Baur. Few men have laboured more indefatigably in the working out of one idea, and few have left behind them such a mass of original work. He was a man of such size as to combine in himself faculties and equipment which are individually and in separation sufficient to fit a man for valuable work. He was a philosopher, a scholar, a man of boundless learning, a theologian, a critic, an historian, and in each department he was supreme. Both in the history of doctrine and in criticism, modern enquiry and method owe him a debt which it is scarcely possible to overestimate.¹

It was Baur's adoption of Hegelian principles which gave life and direction to all his enquiries. Believing in the Hegelian principle that history is an evolution which proceeds in accordance with the laws of mind, or according to a dialectic

1. Dods, Lecture MS., "History of Criticism IV," p. 3. Here again Dods' appreciation of German critics stands in bold contrast to the attitude of his predecessor, Professor Smeaton. In a letter to Robertson Smith, in which he accused Smith of imitating the "chartered audacity" of Germany and Holland, Smeaton said: "I cannot suppose that the sad and bitter harvest produced by that criticism in such men as Baur, Schwegler, Hilgenfeld, Schenkel, Keim, Scholten, Kuenen, and others still more extreme, can find much approval in your own mind. But where will it stop if it is legitimated? There will arise others much more extreme than you, as a Strauss arose out of the school of Baur, and how could we suppress it, if we make all criticism legitimate?" See p. 201, Black and Chrystal, op. cit.

process, he sought to find the thread which connects all human events with one another. To him no person and no event stood by itself nor had it any value in itself. Only as an ascertained part of one great and closely connected whole had each event any importance. No doubt this method often led him astray. Applied too vigorously it forces the facts of history into unreal and illusory connections, and finds analogies where there are none. But not only are his works in this department of permanent value because of the mass of material he accumulated and the fresh light he threw upon it, but especially because he lodged once for all in the public mind the idea that Christianity is a necessary part of a necessary development.

The critical writings of Baur applied to the New Testament the same principles which he had used in the history of dogma. The criticism of Strauss had given a merely negative result. All was unhistorical. In such a conclusion enquiry could not rest. It remained still to ascertain what was the actual history of the first century, of the rise and establishment of Christianity. What were the historical facts and causes which lay at the root of all this myth formation? Baur found his starting point for this investigation, not in the historical books of the New Testament but in the Epistles of Paul. Nothing marks these Epistles¹ more distinctly than the antagonism between the teaching of Paul and the teaching of those who represent Jewish Christianity. This strife between Paulinism and Jewish Christianity is the determining

1. The four Epistles which Baur accepted as definitely Pauline were Galatians, Romans, I and II Corinthians.

factor in the history of that period and, necessarily here as elsewhere, history follows the Hegelian law of development. There is first the differentiation and antagonism and then the reconciliation. To apply this law to primitive Christians was easy.

There were in the person of Jesus these conflicting ideas: the universalism of true spiritual religion and the limitations of the Jewish Messiahship. The problem is to reconcile these and find for them their permanent junction in history, and in accordance with the Hegelian law these contradictory ideas must first come into intense conflict and then be reconciled in a permanent higher unity. This, says Baur, is precisely what we find in the history of the first hundred or hundred and forty years after the Death of Christ. The conflict between the universalism and the limitations which Jesus held together in his own person at once breaks out. The Jewish Christians represented by the original apostles are the champions of limitation; Paul is the champion of universalism, and of freedom from the Jewish law. The conflict is sharp and bitter; Paul's enemies follow him through the world striving to counteract his teaching and destroy his authority. The conflict goes on until it comes to such a height that movements towards peace are found to be necessary. These result in the Catholic Church.¹

Baur said there were these well marked periods in accordance with which the literature of the New Testament must be grouped. To the Apostolic age no document can belong which does not bear on it marks of the strife which characterized the times. Any document which appears to come from a reconciled and united Church must be placed late in the second century. Amply endowed with the courage of his convictions, Baur actually sorted the literature of the New Testament upon this plan and gave to each book its place. Dods readily admitted that the introduction of this positive method was an immense step towards sound criticism.

1. Dods, Lecture MS., "History of Criticism IV," p. 6.

No treatment of the books of the New Testament could any longer be tolerated which looked at them in isolation, as if they were disconnected and rootless. All criticism must henceforth proceed upon the understanding that each writing has its place in the history of the time, and that the chief function of the critic is to connect it with its root in the times out of which it sprang.

A writing can only then be properly understood when its connection with the time in which it appeared has been ascertained. Baur's method was an admirable and much needed lesson in the fundamental fact of criticism that a Document wisely examined can tell you more about itself than any one else can; therefore that a thorough examination of the Document itself and a full comprehension of its purpose and meaning is the first step towards determining its place and date.¹

The scheme on which Baur constructed the history of the primitive church was shown to be erroneous by Dods. There was never any such blending of the two parties into one Church Catholic as Baur supposed. The Gentile Church went on its way and the Judaizers gradually hardened in their narrowness and were denounced as heretics by the theologians of the second century.²

Among the disciples of Baur were Schwegler, Zeller, Hilgenfeld, Köstlin, and Keim. In this band of able and thorough-going critics the immense impulse which Baur had given to Biblical criticism became manifest. In all directions enquiry was pushed

1. Ibid., p. 7.

2. For Dods' method of refuting Baur's theory see pp. 239-242 of this thesis, which deals with his introduction to the Epistle to the Galatians.

in the lines suggested by the master, and no word of the New Testament escaped the scrutiny of these eager enquirers. But soon the detailed results of Baur's criticism were rejected. The order of the Synoptic gospels required by his theory was reversed by his own followers, and in regard to the Pauline Epistles not one of his followers entirely agreed with Baur.

British and French Scholars. During those years of animated discussion and critical enquiry in Germany, Biblical scholarship in Britain made vast progress. Dods recognized that the results reached by Sanday, Westcott, Ellicott, Marshall, Hort, Farrar, Bruce,¹ and especially Lightfoot, while less sensational, were more uniformly reliable. Professor Ramsay of Aberdeen contributed material of the utmost value to the understanding of the New Testament and revealed that there were other factors determining the history and literature of the early Church besides those indicated by Baur.²

France, though slower to respond to theological movements was not impervious to the fresh breath of criticism in the nineteenth century. According to Dods, the most prominent figures among those who used the French language were Renan, Reuss, Godet, Sabatier and Oltraman. It was Reuss' History of Christian Theology in the Apostolic Age which first gained for Biblical Theology a firm footing in Britain. Written in a lively style and exhibiting much insight into the meaning of Scripture, it was

1. Dods' own name deserves a place here.

2. Dods, Lecture MS., "History of Criticism IV," p. 11.

regarded by Dods as one of the best guides to the study of New Testament theology.¹

It may be thought that in his survey of Biblical Criticism, Dods did not do justice to the development of Biblical study among the English speaking peoples. But the fact is that he believed the condition of criticism in Britain in the twentieth century was much more truly the result of the development in Germany than the outcome of any purely English movement.² However, he did briefly discuss the development of Biblical interpretation in Britain in the seventeenth, eighteenth, and nineteenth centuries, and thereby indicated, in a limited way, Britain's efforts in that direction. The few books which he considered significant for the history of the critical movement in Britain during the nineteenth century were Myers' Catholic Thoughts on the Bible and Theology; Matthew Arnold's Literature and Dogma and God and the Bible; the commentaries of Stanley and Jowett; and J.R. Seeley's Ecce Homo.³

The Canon.

Dods' lectures on the Canon, though not intended to be exhaustive, included the most pertinent facts pertaining to the formation of the New Testament Canon. He divided its history into four periods: (1) the Sub-Apostolic, which was not concerned about a New Testament Canon because of the apparent sufficiency

1. Ibid., p. 12.

2. Dods, Lecture MS., "History of Criticism V," pp. 1-2.

3. Ibid., p. 6.

of the Old Testament and oral tradition; (2) 120-180 A.D., which was characterized by the awakening of the Church to the consciousness that it possessed authoritative writings; that is, writings embodying the words of Christ and the teaching of the Apostles; (3) 180-400 A.D., the period during which the authoritative writings were definitely ascertained and classed by themselves as the New Testament Canon; (4) the Reformation Period, when the Canon was authoritatively determined and imposed by Rome while, at the same time, the freedom of private judgment was advocated by the Protestants.

His examination questions, found at the end of Lecture III, give some indication of the extensive coverage of these manuscripts:¹

1. What problems may the history of the Canon be expected to solve?
2. What three steps must the Church take before she can intelligently hold a Canon?
3. In what does canonicity consist?
4. Is the idea of a Canon peculiar to Christianity?
5. What hindrances delayed the formation of a New Testament Canon?
6. Did our Lord or His Apostles betray any intention of furnishing future generations with instruction in a written form?
7. Is there anything incongruous in a spiritual religion possessing a written rule?
8. What was the earliest germ of the Canon? Were our Lord's words from the first authoritative and how were they known?
9. Name the Apostolic Fathers and mention the aspects of the Canon which are visible in their writings.
10. Where is the earliest quotation from a Gospel as Scripture found?
11. When were New Testament Scriptures first read in public, so far as we know?
12. What light does Tatian's Diatessaron throw on the Canon?
13. Who first formed a collection of New Testament Scriptures?

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1. His treatment of the second and third periods included erudite explanations of the contributions of Justin, Tatian, Basileides, Marcion, Irenaeus, Tertullian, Clement, Origen, Eusebius, Athanasius, and Jerome.

14. In what respects did the second century heretics contribute to the formation of the Canon and to the criticism of the text and exegesis?
15. About what date did the Church bring together the bulk of the New Testament Scriptures and affirm their canonicity?
16. What was the peculiarity of the attitude of the third century theologians towards the Canon? (Their contentment with undefined frontier)
17. What imperial order promoted the formation of a canon?
18. In whose writings and at what date do we first find a canon identical with our own?
19. What fixed the Canon practically for the Western Church?
20. What was Jerome's principle in selecting books for the New Testament?
21. When was the Canon made an article of faith?
22. Where did the Church of Rome find its canon?
23. State the difference between the Romanist and Protestant attitude towards Scripture.
24. What is the right of private judgment or witness of the spirit on which Protestantism is founded?
25. State some of Luther's judgments on books of Scripture.
26. What is the true test of Canonicity?¹

One of Dods' most arresting paragraphs opened the fourth lecture on the Canon. First, he contrasted the Catholic who knows why he accepts certain books as canonical, with the Protestant who, though scorning the Romanist because he relies on the authority of the Church, cannot tell on what authority he himself relies. Then he propounded several provocative questions. "The Protestant watchword is, 'The Bible, the whole Bible, and nothing but the Bible,' but how many Protestants are there who could make it quite clear that within the boards of their Bible they have the whole Bible and nothing but the Bible?" "If you asked them to show you that no canonical writing has been omitted, and that no uncanonical writing has been received, how will they proceed to do so?" "Do not Protestants and Romanists alike accept their canonical books

1. Dods, Lecture MS., "Canon III," p. 22.

at the hands of the Church?" "What is the difference between the Protestant and the Romanist on this cardinal point of canonicity?"¹
A captivated classroom awaited Dods' answers.

Early in the lecture he made evident the reason why the question of the Canon was in abeyance prior to the Reformation and the reason why Luther was compelled to set forth with distinctness where the Word of God was to be found and how it could be recognized as the Word of God. Dods' presentation of this material is particularly noteworthy because of its similarity to a paragraph in his famous and controversial sermon preached in Glasgow in 1876. The principle which made Luther a Protestant, and "which constitutes men Protestants always," declared Dods to his students, "is simply this, that the soul needs not the intervention of any authority to bring it into contact with God and the truth, but that God and His truth have power to verify themselves to the individual." Luther did not accept the Gospel because it was written in a book he believed to be inspired, but he accepted it "because it brought new life to his spirit and proved itself to be from God."²

In true Protestant fashion Dods³ claimed the same type of discernment for himself in his sermon "Revelation and Inspiration."

I do not believe what Paul says, because I first believe him to be inspired; but I believe him to be inspired, because he brings light to my spirit, which can only have proceeded from God."³

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1. Dods, Lecture MS., "Canon IV," p. 1. This same general idea was used to introduce the second chapter of his book The Bible: Its Origin and Nature (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1905), See pp. 31, 32.
 2. Dods, Lecture MS., "Canon IV," p. 6.
 3. Dods, Revelation and Inspiration, (Glasgow: John N. Mackinlay, 1877), p. 25.

It was this very statement which provoked an explosive reaction among many of the ministers of the Free Church of Scotland. Dods' defense of this statement was not a citation from Luther, but a simple reference to psychological fact.

I do not see how any one can justly take exception to the statement....This statement I still conceive to be a simple reading off from one of the outstanding facts of mental experience. I put it to every one who is accustomed to analyze his own mental history, whether this is not a true account of the order in which a man advances from unbelief to belief.¹

He had reached the persuasion early in his ministry that through Scripture God Himself so speaks to the soul that the individual is convinced without the intervention of any proof or authority that it is the Word of God. The individual does not need to go to the Church to ask if it be God's Word; his conscience tells him it is.

Deeper than that for a foundation of faith you cannot get, and any faith that is not so deeply founded is insecure--it may last, and it may bring a man to all needed benefit, but it is not reasonably defensible, and therefore it is liable to be upset.²

Thus, did Dods set forth the explanation of his own indomitable faith in the Bible as the Word of God. His own conscience had responded to the self-evidencing voice of God in Scripture with such assurance that no attack, no criticism, no opposition could cause him to veer from his conviction that the Bible is the Word of God.

Also appearing in this course were his views regarding the best method for determining which writings contain the Word of God.

1. Ibid., p. 5.

2. Dods, Lecture MS., "Canon IV," p. 6A. See also pp. 41, 42 of The Bible: Its Origin and Nature.

Luther's direct test of canonicity was to ask, "Does the book in question occupy itself with Christ or does it not?" "Luther, in short, concluded that God has an end to secure in making a revelation, and this end is to bring clear before men His will for our salvation; or, in a word, Christ. The books that promote this end he accepted as canonical."¹

The Westminster Confession makes inspiration the test of canonicity, although it does not in express terms say so. To discover what writings are inspired the Confession says nothing of Prophetic and Apostolic authorship, but refers to the various marks of divinity in the writings themselves and concludes in these words: "Our full persuasion and assurance of the infallible truth and Divine authority thereof, is from the inward work of the Holy Spirit, bearing witness by and with the word in our hearts."²

Dods saw the need for a broader basis in order to justify the inclusion of such a book as Esther, "a book of which the authorship is unknown and to which the inward witness bears at the best a somewhat doubtful testimony to its inspiration."³ The admission of this type of book, he reasoned, can be justified only on the following ground:

If by "canonical writings" we mean the writings through which God conveys to us the knowledge of the revelation He has made, if this be the prominent idea, and if their being the rule of faith and life be an inference from this,

1. Dods, Lecture MS., "Canon IV," p. 8.

2. Ibid., p. 17.

3. Ibid.

then we get a broader basis for the Canon and can admit into it all writings which have a direct connection with God's revelation of Himself in Christ. If the book in question gives us a link in the history of that revelation, or if it represents a stage of God's dealings and of the growth His people had made under these dealings, and if it contains nothing which is quite inconsistent with the idea of its being inspired, then its claim to be admitted seems valid. Therefore I would be disposed to say that the two attributes which give canonicity are congruity with the main end of revelation and direct historical connection with the revelation of God in history.¹

This conclusion, though perhaps not original,² was of major significance for the age in which it appeared, an age which was marked by scepticism, an age which looked with suspicion on many of the claims made about the Bible, and an age which welcomed a scientific approach to every problem.

Several other interesting opinions were expressed in this same lecture, one of which revealed his desire to see the Creeds altered so that a clearer distinction would be drawn between different books in the Canon.

There is no reasonable doubt that the bulk of the books of the New Testament come to us so accredited that to reject them is equivalent to rejecting the authority of Christ; but a few are not so accredited, and it is a question whether our creeds ought not to reflect the fact that in the early Church some books were universally admitted into the Canon, while regarding seven of the books of our New Testament grave doubts were entertained....It is not a calamity over which one need make great moan, but unquestionably the combining of less authenticated books with those that are thoroughly authenticated has rather tended to bring the latter class under suspicion with persons ignorant of their history.³

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1. Dods, Lecture MS., "Canon IV," pp. 18A. See also pp. 53, 54 of The Bible: Its Origin and Nature.
 2. A.B. Bruce reached a similar conclusion.
 3. Ibid., pp. 19, 19A.

The idea of altering the creeds was not a new one to Dods. In 1866, at the age of thirty-three, he stated this idea in a public lecture which was later printed along with lectures by Principal Fairbairn, Dr. Robert Buchanan, Dr. Henry Calderwood, and Dr. Alexander MacEwen.

We do not think that any such progress can be made in theology as shall prove any statement of our Confession to be false; but we think such progress is possible as may make it expedient to amend, retrench, or add to both the substance and the form of our Confession. We think it quite unwarranted to conclude that theology has now received its fullest development; that while the Scripture must continue to nourish individual life, it is exhausted for theological purposes, the most accurate statements of doctrine being attained, and the science finished and complete.¹

"There is nothing very dangerous or startling," he continued, "in asserting that some of the clauses of the Confession are obsolete," and that possibly some of its articles might be so drawn up as more pointedly to meet "the errors of our own day." There is nothing startling in this, "if only it be made openly and specifically, and without an air of mystery which fills the public mind with a vague suspicion that the whole Confession or some considerable part of it, is rotten and injurious."²

The clearest expression of this idea was given in his lectures on the History of Criticism.

Take our own age. Through the results of scientific research and of philosophic thought, fresh light has been thrown upon the mode of God's action upon the

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1. Dods, "Revelation of God in Scripture, Viewed in Respect Both to Theological Science and to the Proper Use of Creeds," Divine Revelation Explained and Vindicated (Glasgow: David Bryce and Co., 1866), p. 192.
 2. Ibid., p. 194.

physical world and upon men. Theology cannot assume the superior attitude of an unalterable science, such as mathematics, but must adjust her doctrines to these new results. If she simply abides by her traditions and makes no attempt to keep herself in touch with things as they are, she inevitably loses influence and justly, Isolation spells decadence.¹

In his New College lectures another of his opinions was voiced in answer to the objection that a great risk is taken by Protestants in leaving the question of canonicity to individual research and private judgment. His reply left no doubt about his open-minded approach to learning.

I reply that it is a vast advantage so to leave such questions, for it is to invite investigation, and to invite investigation is to secure that one day the truth will shine in the eye of the world. What value attaches to the unanimity that is secured by closing every one's eyes, and shutting every one's mouth? That unanimity alone is valuable which the truth itself commands. And this unanimity can only be attained by diligent, reverent, truth-seeking investigation. For my part, I think Luther was right in holding that regarding some of the books there must be difference of opinion always; but of the great bulk of the New Testament...there will be entire agreement.²

Another reason why Dods favored the idea of allowing every man to be the judge of what is Scripture and what is not was discussed in a long article entitled "The Seat of Authority in Religion" which was published in two American journals in 1892.

Now it is remarkable that practically this is already our manner of treating the Bible. Who is at the reader's elbow as he reads Exodus and Leviticus to tell him what is of permanent authority, and what was for the Mosaic dispensation only? Who whispers to us, as we read Genesis and Kings, This is exemplary; this is not? Who sifts for us the speeches of Job, and enables us to treasure as divine truth what he utters in one verse, while we reject the next as Satanic raving?...What enables the humblest

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1. Dods, Lecture MS., "History of Criticism II," p. 36. He also discusses this idea in a letter to Henry Sloan Coffin. See Later Letters, p. 92.
 2. Dods, Lecture MS., "Canon IV," p. 20.

Christian to come safely through all the cursing Psalms and go straight to forgive his enemy? What tells us we may eat things strangled, though the whole college of Apostles deliberately and expressly prohibited such eating? Who assures us we need not anoint the sick with oil, though James bids us do so? In a word, how is it that the simplest reader can be trusted with the Bible, and can be left to find his own spiritual nourishment in it? Paul solves the whole matter for us in his bold and exhaustive words: "The spiritual man--the man who has the spirit of Christ--judgeth all things." This, and this only, is the true touchstone by which all things are tried. Let a man accept Christ and live in his Spirit, and there is no fear that he will reject what Christ means he should receive.¹

With this as his point of view it is understandable why he told his students that he placed the authority of Christ above the authority of Scripture:

Let us remember that the true Protestant order is, first, faith in Christ; second, faith in Scripture. Our faith in Christ does not hang upon our faith in Scripture, but our faith in Scripture hangs upon our faith in Christ. Our faith in Christ may depend on Scripture as a true history; but not as an inspired canonical book. It is Christ as presented in Scripture or by other means, by preaching as in the first age and often now, that evokes faith. He and he only is the true Protestant who knows that God has spoken to him in Christ, and who knows this irrespective of any infallible authority separable from Christ himself, whether that authority be the authority of the Church or the authority of Scripture. We must not shift the ultimate authority from Christ to Scripture.²

Dods' thorough and comprehensive New College lectures, like his well-prepared sermons, formed the basis of later publications. In 1904 when he delivered the Bross Lectures at Lake Forest College, Lake Forest, Illinois, U.S.A., many sections of these

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1. Dods, "The Seat of Authority in Religion," The Christian Union, 45:64, January 9, 1892. See also The Magazine of Christian Literature, 5:398-99, February, 1892.
 2. Dods, Lecture MS., "Canon IV," p. 20A.

manuscripts were used without alteration. Much of this material was published in 1905 under the title, The Bible: Its Origin and Nature,¹ and enjoyed a wide circulation both in America and in Britain.

The prestige of the Bross Lectures was partly responsible for the wide interest in all books sponsored by the Bross Foundation. Appearing only once every ten years, its prize of six thousand dollars² was open to scientists, Christian philosophers, and historians of all nations. Its object was "to call out the best efforts of the highest talent and the ripest scholarship of the world, to illustrate from science, or any department of knowledge, and to demonstrate the divine origin and authority of the Christian Scriptures; and further to show how both Science and Revelation coincide."³ The Trustees of the Bross Fund were empowered to select and appoint particular scholars who should prepare books upon some theme that would fulfill this object. Dods was the second writer ever appointed by the Trustees. Thus, the Bross Foundation was indirectly responsible for preserving and providing in book form Dods' significant opinions about the Canon.

The time Dods spent in laboriously compiling and arranging the material for his class-room lectures on "The Canon" was rewarded in a way which could not have been anticipated--the fruit of his labor was extended to a vast audience of laymen and clergymen in America and in Britain.

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1. Dods, The Bible: Its Origin and Nature (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1905) and (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1905).
 2. It increased to seven thousand five hundred dollars in 1960.
 3. Dods, The Bible: Its Origin and Nature, p. viii.

III. EXEGETICAL COURSES

The Epistle to the Galatians.

His lectures on Galatians formed the basis of his article, "Epistle to the Galatians", which appeared in Hastings' Dictionary of the Bible in 1899.¹ The few alterations and additions made for publication, though of no major significance, enriched the later lectures.² Rarely did Dods use any visual aids in his teaching, but in discussing the problem of the destination of the epistle he made frequent use of a map while explaining the different areas designated by the name "Galatia", which had a wider and narrower application.³

In his introduction he followed his customary practice of explaining the different positions held by various scholars, with occasional refutations of the most untenable theories.⁴ One of the most interesting features of his introduction was his refutation of his own previously held view as to the destination of the epistle. The opinion which he held before going to New College in 1889 was printed in his book, An Introduction to the New

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1. The proof-sheets of the article were then used as substitutes for sections of the earlier MS. notes.
 2. E.g., for Hastings' Dictionary he drew from his extensive knowledge of the early fathers and listed the early sources which referred to Paul as the author of Galatians. The dictionary article also listed the most recent critics who were assaulting the authenticity of the epistle.
 3. Dods, Lecture MSS., "Galatians I", pp. 3, 12; "Galatians II," pp. 34, 38; "Galatians VII," p. 19.
 4. His own views were more frequently expressed in Galatians than in any of his other expository lectures.

Testament. This opinion, which was no doubt formulated under the influence of Lightfoot, favored the geographically limited district in the north, inhabited by the Celtic Galatians, rather than the wider region comprehended in the Roman province of Galatia.

Some writers (Hausrath, Renan, and others) have sought the churches addressed by Paul in the Roman province called Galatia (formed 26 B.C.), which embraced Lycaonia, Isauria, and parts of Phrygia and Pisidia. But it is much more likely that when Galatia is spoken of in the Acts and here the old geographical division is intended. Tavium, Pessinus, and Ancyra.¹ Certainly in the Acts Lycaonia, Pisidia and Phrygia are spoken of as if they were distinct from Galatia.

But after the appearance in 1893 of W.M. Ramsay's book, The Church and the Roman Empire Before A.D. 170, which presented much significant and persuasive information in favor of the Roman province of Galatia, Dods adopted Ramsay's point of view.²

On a survey of the entire evidence it seems to me that the South Galatian theory though not without its difficulties is the more defensible.³

All that we learn from the Epistle itself regarding those to whom it was addressed agrees with the supposition that it was sent to South Galatia.⁴

When he wrote this lecture the majority of critics held that the term "Galatia" was used in the narrower sense to denote the district of Galatia proper,⁵ therefore he felt compelled to treat at great length the reasons on which the South Galatian

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1. Marcus Dods, An Introduction To the New Testament, (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1888), p. 110.
 2. This is a clear example of Dods' readiness and willingness to accept new light on any subject.
 3. Dods, Lecture MS. "Galatians II", p. 40. See also A Dictionary of the Bible, ed., James Hastings (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1899), p. 94.
 4. Dods, Lecture MS., "Galatians I", p. 14.
 5. Weiss, Lipsius, Sieffert, Lightfoot, Davidson, Godet and others. The claims of provincial Galatia were advocated by Renan and Perrot in France; Mynster, Weizsäcker, Hausrath, Zahn, and Pfleiderer in Germany; and Ramsay in Scotland.

theory was built.¹ His main reasons for adopting the South Galatian theory can be summarized as follows: (1) As it was Paul's custom to follow the Roman terminology and speak of districts of a country by their provincial names, as Asia, Achaia, Macedonia, he, in addressing the Churches of Galatia, probably meant the Churches included in the Roman province Galatia and not necessarily in the ethnographical Galatia. Luke, it is true, used the ethnographical titles, speaking of the very churches here addressed as belonging to Pisidia and Lycaonia, but this was not Paul's usage. (2) If the Epistle was addressed to North Galatian churches then it was addressed to churches of whose foundation Luke gave no account. This is all the more extraordinary because Paul and his preaching were at first received by the churches addressed, with unusual eagerness; and they had shown to Paul a singular devotedness. That is to say, unless the South Galatian theory is true, the Epistle was addressed to churches of which we have never previously heard; while the churches which received Paul so gladly were never written to at all. (3) The description given in Acts 16 of the route Paul followed on his second missionary journey makes it extremely unlikely that he ever visited North Galatia. (4) If he ever preached in North Galatia it lay so remote that the probability is that he must have gone there with the set purpose to preach the gospel. But in Galatians 4:13 he distinctly stated that it was owing to his being overtaken by illness that he preached in Galatia. (5) The manner

1. Dods, Lecture MSS. "Galatians I", pp. 3-14, "Galatians II", pp. 25-43. See also A Dictionary of the Bible, pp. 93-95.

in which he spoke (in the Epistle) about Barnabas is proof that those to whom he wrote knew Barnabas. But it was only on his first missionary journey, that is, when he visited South Galatia, that Barnabas was with Paul.

An unusual departure was taken in the section which followed Dods' general introduction, for there he engaged in a lengthy presentation of Baur's criticism and its bearing upon the study of the Epistle to the Galatians. He then proceeded to show that Baur's theory of early church history was built upon an inadequate assumption. Rarely did Dods discuss philosophy in direct connection with his lectures on New Testament books. Occasionally he made references to philosophers and to certain philosophical influences, but only as passing references. However, at this point he digressed in order to give the background of Baur's views.¹ The Hegelianism of Baur, he explained, showed itself in Baur's rigid application to history of the law of natural evolution and in his tacit assumption that the evolution will follow the "spiral" movement controlled by the collision of opposites. In mentioning the application of it which Baur made to New Testament history, Dods explained that it resulted from the grand idea which lies at the foundation of all Hegel's philosophy: the unity of all things. This unity requires that no fact which cannot be reduced to law be admitted as

1. Two other reasons for discussing Baur emerged during the development of his lecture. (1) Baur's criticism had deeply colored all subsequent handling of the epistle to the point that a proper understanding of certain commentaries would not be possible unless the reader had some previous knowledge of Baur. (2) It was a useful lesson to observe how a philosophy may influence New Testament criticism.

existing in the intelligible universe. All opposites can only be apparent or transitional, bound to help towards a higher unity which they produce and in which they meet and are reconciled. These were the lines on which Baur's scheme was constructed. The universalism of spiritual religion and the limitation of Judaism met in Christianity, and in order that the good that was in each could be retained, they first entered into conflict and then were reconciled in the higher unity of the church catholic.¹

Dods particularly wished to inform his students of the weaknesses of Baur's theory, an essential feature of which was this formation of Catholic Christianity by the reconciliation of two different types of the faith: Jewish-Christianity and Gentile-Christianity. Even among scholars opposed to the views of Baur the idea existed that the Catholic Church was the result of this amalgamation of Jewish and Gentile Christianity.² Therefore, Dods led his students in a closer examination of the period concerned in order to disclose the fact that no such reconciliation ever took place; that is, the reconciliation between Jewish and Gentile Christianity on which Baur built his history and his criticism had no existence.³ His purpose in treating the subject at length can best be seen in his own words:

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1. Dods, Lecture MS., "Galatians II", pp. 1-21.
 2. Schaff in his conclusion to Vol. I of History of Apostolic Christianity said: "It now only remained to complete the consolidation of the church...to take up the conservative tendency of Peter and the progressive tendency of Paul, as embodied respectively in the Jewish-Christian and the Gentile-Christian churches, and to fuse them into a third and higher tendency in a permanent organism;..." p. 404.
 3. Although a rarity in Dods' lectures, this type of refutation of a German scholar was more or less expected of the men who held the New Testament chairs in the Scottish Divinity schools. In fact, the chair of "Apologetic and New Testament Exegesis" in Glasgow Free College displayed in its very name the dual role

This question can only be settled by a more attentive consideration of the history of Jewish Christianity; a history which must be understood if we are to understand the New Testament writings. The English scholars, Lightfoot Westcott, and Salmond together with a large number of German scholars, in opposing the views of Baur have underrated the width of the cleft between Jewish and Gentile Christianity in Apostolic times. Two errors have resulted from this. They have overlooked or toned down the references to this cleft in the Apostolic writings, and they have entirely neglected the connection of the first century Jewish-Christianity with the second century Jewish-Christianity heresies. Neglecting these two important historical features of the period they have either declared the years from 70-120 utterly obscure or they have filled them with a fanciful history. They suppose that the fierce hatred which pursued Paul and his doctrine throughout his life disappeared immediately after his death, and that the Jewish-Christians who had so obstinately held out against communion with the Gentiles were by some unknown influence induced to lay aside¹ their prejudices and cordially eat with the uncircumcised.

There were, then, two opposing views of the Apostolic and Sub-Apostolic history which Dods brought to the attention of his students. The ordinary view was that the cleft between Jewish and Gentile Christianity disappeared in the destruction of Jerusalem and that the Jewish Christian heretics of the second century, the Nazarenes and Ebionites, had no direct connection with the Jewish Christianity of the first century. The other view was that the cleft was as wide as ever up to the end of Paul's life, that it survived the fall of Jerusalem, and that the Jewish Christian sects which were pronounced heretical by the Church of the second century were the direct lineal descendants and representation of the Jewish Christianity of the first century. Dods,

of the New Testament professor. John Dickie in his Gunning Lectures said, "This somewhat strange collocation of subjects is explicable, I rather think, because when the Chair was founded, the main attack on Christianity was the Tübingen attack on the historicity of the writings of the New Testament." Fifty Years of British Theology (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1937), p. 88.

1. Dods, Lecture MS., "Galatians II", p. 13.

with unusual vehemence, held to the latter. His reasons were as follows: (1) There is much evidence to show that until the death of Paul the cleft between the Jewish and Gentile Christians continued.¹ (2) There is no evidence that in consequence of the destruction of Jerusalem, the Jewish-Christians abandoned their peculiar tenets and practices and were absorbed into the Gentile Church. The Christians who escaped from the destruction of Jerusalem made their way to the country east of Jordan and the Dead Sea and settled in Pella and other places. It was precisely in these places, that according to early Christian writers, the Nazarenes and Ebionites of the second century were found and the obvious inference is that these heretics were the lineal descendants of the Jewish-Christians of the primitive times.

The persons known as Nazarenes and Ebionites in the second century are identified with the Jewish-Christians of the first century by their rigid adherence to the Mosaic Law. Also, they denied the authority of Paul, precisely as their predecessors had done. And the majority of them denied the divinity of Jesus, which was the Jewish method of evading the reproach of the Cross. It would seem then to be the fact that the Jewish-Christian church hardened in its peculiar tenets and gave birth to those sects which were known as Nazarenes and Ebionites. Thus, by the extraordinary irony of history those who had been the ultra-orthodox of the primitive church became the heretics of the second century.²...That very zeal for the law which refused to recognize the equality of the Gentile Christians itself was pronounced heretical by the catholic church of the following age....It would appear, therefore, that there never was an amalgamation of the two great parties in the apostolic church.³

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1. E.g., Acts 21, where Paul on his last visit to Jerusalem found many Christians zealous for the law; Paul's warning in Philippians against those who obscured the freeness of the gospel and the sufficiency of Christ; Allusions in Timothy and Titus to the mischief wrought by the extreme Judaizing party.
 2. Dods' opinion of extreme orthodoxy in Scotland was revealed in his lectures on the History of Criticism. "The narrow and rigid orthodoxy of the first century became heretical in the second, a process which has been always going on and which we may see illustrated in our own country." Lecture MS., "History of Criticism IV," p. 8.
 3. Dods, Lecture MS., "Galatians II", p. 18.

Dods' thoroughness in teaching was further revealed in the details he gave regarding the growth of the Judaizing party down to the date of the Epistle to the Galatians. His comments were summarized into three paragraphs for Hastings' Dictionary, but in his lecture he devoted over twenty-three pages to this subject. The simple, lucid, logical and interesting development of this phase of the lecture undoubtedly gave his students a clear and intelligible grasp of the reasons why Paul wrote to the Galatians as he did.¹

Exposition. Space does not permit a complete presentation of all the cardinal points of his exposition of this Epistle. However, a brief consideration of his treatment of selected verses from the first and second chapters is called for in order to see his handling of three difficulties of the Epistle: (1) its discrepancy with the Acts of the Apostles, (2) Paul's purpose in going to Jerusalem, (3) the collision with Peter at Antioch.

(1) Some scholars² maintained that the autobiographical statements made by Paul in Galatians 1 and 2 shed an unfavorable light on Acts. The first discrepancy is that whereas Paul said that three years elapsed after his conversion before he returned to Jerusalem, Luke said (Acts 9:23)³ ὅς δὲ ἐπληροῦντο ἡμέραι ἰσχυρᾶς. Dods easily accounted for the different expressions. "To find here a discrepancy damaging to the trustworthiness of

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1. Dods, Lecture MS., "Galatians Booklet B," pp. 4-26.
 2. Baur, Weizsäcker and others.
 3. "When many days were fulfilled".

Acts, is to neglect the consideration that St. Paul had a reason for giving the exact time, while St. Luke had no occasion to be definite and rigidly exact."¹ There were four other discrepancies between the Epistle and the Acts which Dods handled in an equally satisfactory manner.

(2) He then proceeded to consider the motive of Paul's going to Jerusalem. Did he go up to get instruction, or to have his mission sanctioned by the apostolic college, or merely to make the acquaintance of Peter? In a word, what precisely does *ἱστορήσαι* mean? The word, Dods explained, is from *ἵστωρ* which means one who knows, and the first meaning is "to know by enquiry."

Obviously, this sense would not be congruous with Paul's argument, but, as Wetstein has shown, it was commonly used of visiting or making the acquaintance of and especially of remarkable things or persons. So Chrysostom says it was used of those who made themselves thoroughly acquainted with great and celebrated cities. Thus Plutarch tells us that the parents of Cicero's school fellows used to come to the schools where he was taught to see Cicero *ἰδεῖν τὸν κικέρωνα, καὶ ἱστορήσαι* and to see for themselves his celebrated acuteness....The meaning then is: I went to Jerusalem to make the acquaintance of this distinguished person, (is there the slightest touch of irony in the word (*ἱστορήσαι* ?) not² to learn a gospel from him, but to make his acquaintance.²

*ἕτερον δὲ τῶν ἀποστόλων οὐκ εἶδον, εἰ μὴ Ἰάκωβον τὸν ἀδελφὸν τοῦ κυρίου.*³ So that there was no ecclesiastical recognition of Paul or instructions given him. Does Paul mean to class James among the Apostles? James the Lord's brother was not an Apostle. *εἰ μὴ* must here be construed as in Luke 4:27⁴ ... and

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1. Dods, Lecture MS., "Galatians VIII," p. 21.
 2. Hort gave the same meaning to this word: "He went up *ἱστορήσαι* *κηρῶν* to "explore" St. Peter, to find out how he would be disposed to treat the persecutor now become a champion." F.J.A. Hort, *Judaistic Christianity*, (London: Macmillan and Co., 1894), p. 56.
 3. "But other of the Apostles saw I none save James the Lord's brother."
 4. "There were many lepers in Israel in the time of Elisha and none of them was cleansed *εἰ μὴ* Naaman the Syrian who was not a leper in Israel. *εἰ μὴ* must be rendered 'but'." Dods, Lecture MS., "Galatians VII," p. 17.

Matthew 24:36.¹ We may therefore legitimately render *ἐγὼ μὴ*
here by "but".²

Several characteristics of Dods' method of teaching appeared in this exposition of Galatians 1:18-19. (a) clear presentation of the problem, (b) systematic handling of the answer, (c) keen aptitude in Greek (e.g. *ἰσοτόπου*, *ἐγὼ μὴ*), (d) presentation of the findings of other scholars (e.g. Wetstein, Baur, Weizsäcker), and (e) detailed knowledge of early Christian and classical Greek and Latin writers (e.g. Chrysostom, Plutarch).

(3) The third problem, which concerned Paul's collision with Peter at Antioch (2:11f), received much longer treatment,³ and accordingly deserves more space for recapitulation because, among other things, it gives evidence of Dods' remarkable ability to recreate descriptively a New Testament situation so that the original circumstances become alive again. When the Judaizers came to Antioch⁴ they executed a change of front. "They no longer demanded that the Gentiles be circumcised," expounded Dods, "but merely declared that they themselves, being circumcised Jews, could not eat with them." They allowed uncircumcised Gentiles to be counted Christians, but they declined to communicate with them or to mix socially with them. They no longer dared to say, "No uncircumcised person can be a Christian"; but they said, "No uncircumcised person is fit to sit at meat with pure Jews."

1. "Of that day knoweth no man, nor even the angels, *ἐγὼ μὴ* my Father only."

2. Dods, Lecture MS., "Galatians VII," pp. 16, 17.

3. Twenty-one pages.

4. Approximately two years after the Jerusalem Council's decision not to require circumcision of the Gentiles.

That is, they divided the Church of Christ (which was intended to obliterate all class distinctions), into a lower and a higher grade, and anyone who wished to be considered a complete and perfect Christian must submit to circumcision. "This was their new ground," Dods continued, "and it might be found easy to persuade some people that all that the Jerusalem Council had decided was that uncircumcised Gentiles might be Christians, but not that they were on the same level as Jewish Christians."¹

Dods then explained how Peter was trapped into this snare by clever schemers. Peter, he said, was about the last man one would have expected to fall into this snare. He was before all else a man genial, sociable, courageous, frank, human. One might have expected him to be much readier than Paul to fraternize with anybody, Jew or Gentile. Moreover, he had been specially instructed by the vision of the sheet filled with all kinds, to call nothing common or unclean. But his very sociability laid him open to the pressure of those who wished to use him. He could stand firm as a rock before declared enemies, but he found it very difficult to resist friends and to encounter their black looks and coldness. Paul clearly saw that Peter, "by resiling from the attitude he had assumed towards the Gentile converts," was virtually giving up the principle that Christ is sufficient for all men and makes all men one, abolishing all distinction either natural or acquired. "The grace of God in freely bestowing salvation is obscured if what men can be and do gives them some

1. Dods, Lecture MS., "Galatians VIII," pp. 2-3.

higher standing with God."¹

Dods' handling of the Greek was correlated to his general exposition in such a way that his flow of thought was easy to follow.

κατὰ πρόσωπον αὐτῷ ἑντέστην ² cannot mean as Origen and Jerome held that Paul withstood him "in appearance"; that the opposition was an arranged show to illustrate the significance of the point in question and give Paul opportunity of explaining his position.

πρὸ τοῦ γὰρ εἰσεῖν τινασ ἀπὸ Ἰακώβου ³ Does the γὰρ introduce the ground of Peter's culpability or of Paul's withstanding him? Probably the former. Peter was blameworthy because of his inconsistency. For before some of James' followers came to Antioch, Peter had been mixing freely with the Gentile converts, but when they made their appearance he began to withdraw and separate from them. (The gentiles being required by the Jerusalem decrees to abstain from things offered to idols and from things strangled and from blood, they were really pure according to the Jewish standard and Peter could have no scruple in eating with them.) Observe the imperfect συνῆσθην "he was in the habit of eating"; ὑπέστειλεν καὶ ἀφώριζεν ἑαυτὸν "He began to withdraw and separate himself." Observe also that μετὰ τῶν ἐθνῶν is used as in English, of individual Gentiles.

...Peter's action was dictated by his fear of those whom James had sent φοβούμενος τοὺς ἐκ περιτομῆς. Presumably, because he feared that he, the Apostle of the Circumcision, might lose his influence and damage his position by seeming to insult the prejudices of those with whom he was most closely allied.⁴

"It was not because on principle Peter could not eat" with Christian Gentiles. This principle he had given up by eating with them. It was not because he thought there was any defilement in so doing but solely because he feared to offend his Jewish friends or be misinterpreted by them. "This is indicated

1. Ibid., p. 4.

2. Galatians 2:11b, "I withstood him to the face".

3. Galatians 2:12a, "For before that certain came from James".

4. Dods, op. cit., pp. 5-6.

not only in φοβούμενος but in ὑπέσχετο αὐτὸν which means 'withdrew through fear'. It is frequently used in Polybius of secret movements of an army, the ὑπὸ conveying the sense of shrinking."¹

What he [Paul] said to Peter he summarily reports in what remains of this chapter. And so far as Peter's personal conduct was concerned the very first words are final. εἰ οὐ 'Ιουδαῖος ὑπάρχων ἐθνικῶς καὶ οὐκ 'Ιουδαῖῶς ζῇ, πῶς τὰ ἔθνη ἀναγκάζεις 'Ιουδαΐζειν. "If you who are (by origin-- ὑπάρχων) a Jew live as the Gentiles and not as the Jews how (πῶς not τί) compellest thou the Gentiles to live as do the Jews?" The argument was final. If the Mosaic law was not binding on a pure-blooded Jew, then certainly it could not bind a Gentile. If the Jew himself discarded Jewish customs, on what plea or with what consistency could he demand that Gentiles observe them? But this was precisely what Peter was doing. He himself had thrown off Jewish restraints until the Judaizers appeared, but then he altered his practice and treated the Gentiles as ones with whom a decent Jew could not live."²

Dods differed from Westcott and Hort who believed that Paul's words to Peter end at verse 14. He believed they ran to the end of the chapter. This opinion was based on Paul's use of the pronoun "we" and his emphasis on the purpose of faith.

In verses 15 and 16 Paul lays down the proposition fundamental to his gospel, that Jews and Gentiles alike must be justified by faith in Christ and not by works of the law... "We by nature Jews and not sinners of the Gentiles." "We", i.e., you Peter, and I, and the λοιποὶ 'Ιουδαῖοι (v. 13). This "we" finds its verb in ἐπιστεβόμεν (v. 16) after being resumed by καὶ ἡμεῖς (even we). This is a better construction than that suggested by Lightfoot, who wishes to supply after ἡμεῖς the substantive verb ἐσμέν Paul here states the fundamental principle of his gospel as if it were admitted by Jewish Christians. This is what they all in common acknowledged--that a man is not justified by works of law (N.B. omission of article), but by faith in Jesus Christ. It was our knowledge of this, he says, which led "even" us to believe..... This we did that we might be justified by faith in Christ and not by works of law.... Some might perhaps have supposed some other reason for their belief in Christ, but Paul insists on this that it was for justification they believed and because justification could not otherwise be had."³

1. Ibid., p. 7.

2. Ibid., pp. 8-9.

3. Ibid., pp. 9-11. Here Dods digressed for a moment to say that

The remaining portions of Dods' exposition of the Epistle to the Galatians were impressive in their reflection of his spiritual insight, his keen discernment of Greek idiom, and above all, his thoroughness. It was often said of him, after he became a Professor, that he devoted his best effort to the work of his chair.¹ This is understandable when one realizes that in preparing this course on Galatians, he consulted the works of no less than sixty scholars, four of whom were Roman Catholic.

The Gospel of John

Among the best known contributions which Dods made to the field of New Testament studies were his commentaries on the Fourth Gospel. His thoughts on this Gospel appeared in three different books: An Introduction To The New Testament (1888), The Gospel of St. John (The Expositor's Bible, 1891),² and The Gospel According to St. John (The Expositor's Greek Testament, 1897). The material contained in his commentary for The Expositor's Bible was taken from his sermons,³ while the New College lectures formed the basis for his commentary for The Expositor's Greek Testament.

The high standard of scholarship which Dods attained in his

belief in Christ for justification was "a way of presenting adherence to Christ which is rather going out of fashion--emphasis being now laid rather on the elevation of character which adherence to Christ brings." p. 11A.

1. Aberdeen Journal, April 7, 1909.
2. This was divided into two volumes, the second of which appeared in 1892.
3. The few extant sermon manuscripts on John prove this; e.g., the sermon "Mary Anoints Jesus," John 12:1-8, preached in April, 1882, is also found on pp. 3-16 of The Gospel of St. John, Vol. II.

classroom lectures can be determined from the fact that large portions of his lecture manuscripts were suitable for publication without revision. For example, the section from page 702 to page 722 of The Expositor's Greek Testament, Volume I, is almost a word for word reproduction of his classroom lectures.¹ This partly explains why his students had such great confidence in and respect for his scholarship and why his teaching was so stimulating and helpful to them. They knew they were receiving carefully prepared, up-to-date information.

Dods' sincere appreciation of the Gospel of John was not based on religious reasons alone. "In the whole range of literature," said he, "there is no composition which is a more perfect work of art, or which more rigidly excludes whatever does not subserve its main end."

From the first word to the last there is no paragraph, sentence, or expression which is out of its place or with which we could dispense. Part hangs together with part in perfect balance. The sequence may at times be obscure, but sequence there always is. The relevancy of this or that remark may not at first sight be apparent, but irrelevancy is impossible to this writer.²

He firmly believed that the Apostle John was the author of the Fourth Gospel. One of the main reasons on which he based his opinion was the fact that in the last quarter of the second century the Fourth Gospel was accepted by the Church as the work of the Apostle and was recognized as canonical. The very fact

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1. Coinciding with pp. 68-139 of Lecture MSS. "John III, IV, and V". Of course, these lectures had been revised many times previous to their incorporation in The Expositor's Greek Testament, and they were revised again after being returned from the printer. Even his lectures re-written as late as 1904 and 1907 show continued revision! One could almost say that his lectures were always so up to date that when the opportunity to publish came, his manuscripts were "ready".
 2. Dods, The Gospel of St. John, Vol. I, (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1891), p. ix.

that a Gospel so obviously different from the Synoptic Gospels should have been unanimously received as apostolic was, to Dods, a weighty testimony.

In the last decade of the nineteenth century, what had driven many critics to a disbelief in the Apostolic authorship of the Gospel was the character of the conversations and addresses which the Fourth Gospel attributes to Jesus. Some critics pronounced these discourses to be entirely fictitious, ascribed to Jesus for the sake of illustrating and enforcing opinions of the author. Others supposed that the discourses contained only a small portion of historical truth. To satisfy these objections Dods turned to the reports in the Synoptic Gospels which present a criterion by which these discourses may be judged.

Doubts there may be regarding the very words ascribed to our Lord in this or that passage of the Synoptists, doubts there must be, whether we are to follow Matthew or Luke, when these two differ; but practically there is no doubt at all, even among extreme critics, that we may gather from those Gospels a clear idea both of the form and of the substance of our Lord's teaching.¹

One consideration offered by Dods has found its way into many subsequent arguments in favor of the Johannine authorship. Dods did not deny that a comparison of the Fourth Gospel with the first three is often disconcerting, for it is obvious that in the Fourth Gospel the discourses occupy a different position, and differ also both in style and in matter from those recorded in the Synoptic

1. Dods, The Gospel According to St. John, Vol. 1 of The Expositor's Greek Testament, (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1897), p.673. An excellent summary of his arguments can be found in his article "The Teaching of Christ in the Gospel of John", Biblical World, 6:472ff, December, 1895.

Gospels. But, Dods reasoned, "it is to be considered that if John has had nothing new to tell, no fresh aspect of Christ or His teaching to present, he would not have written at all."¹ John knew of the other three Gospels and the very fact that he added a fourth leads one to expect that it will be different, not only in omitting scenes from the life of Christ with which already the previous Gospels had made men familiar, but by presenting some new aspect of Christ's person and teaching. One of Dods' strongest points revolved around the lack of inconsistency between the Gospels; that is, the faith which has found its resting-place in the Christ of the Synoptics is not unsettled or perplexed by anything it finds in John. He summarized his evaluation of the evidence in the following words:

While, then, it cannot be affirmed that the internal evidence uniformly points to the Johannine authorship, neither can it be said that it is decisively against it. There are difficulties on either alternative. But when to the internal evidence the weight of external attestation is added, by far the most probable conclusion is that the Fourth Gospel is the work of the Apostle John, and that it is historically trustworthy.²

Exposition. Dods' thorough knowledge of Greek enabled him to discern many fine distinctions which were overlooked by others. For example, in his explanation of John 19:11 he saw that Jesus was not comparing the sinfulness of Pilate and Caiaphas, as many scholars supposed, but that Jesus was emphasizing the heinousness of Caiaphas' act. Jesus was undergoing a second private examination by Pilate, but when He refused to answer, Pilate was indignant.

1. Ibid., p. 675.

2. Ibid., p. 676. In the classroom, much of Dods' introduction to John was read from his commentary on John.

"Speakest thou not unto me? knowest thou not that I have power to crucify thee, and have power to release thee?" Jesus answered, "Thou couldst have no power at all against me, except it were given thee from above: therefore he that delivered me unto thee hath the greater sin."

Pilate must be reminded that the power he vaunts is not inherently his, but is given to him for God's purposes. From this it follows, *διὰ τοῦτο*, that *ὁ παραδούς με σοι*, "he that delivered me unto thee," to wit, Caiaphas (although the designation being that which is constantly used of Judas it has not unnaturally been referred to him), *μείζονα ἁμαρτίαν ἔχει*, "hath greater Sin," not than you, Pilate [as understood by most interpreters], but greater than in other circumstances it would have been. Had Pilate been a mere irresponsible executioner their sin would have been sufficiently heinous; but in using the official representative of God's truth and justice to fulfil their own wicked and unjust designs, they involve themselves in a darker criminality.¹

Another example of his careful reading appears in his exposition of John 3:4 which is part of Nicodemus' interview with Jesus. Whereas many assumed that Nicodemus interpreted Jesus' remarks to mean a second physical birth, Dods was persuaded that Nicodemus did not accept Jesus' words in that way.

In this reply there is no attempt to fence with Jesus, but merely an expression of the bewilderment created by His statement. The emphasis is on *πῶς*, which asks for further explanation. The *μή* of the second clause shows that Nicodemus understood that Jesus could not mean a second physical birth. That our Lord understood Nicodemus' words as a request for further explanation appears from Him at once proceeding to give it.²

When cases of discrepancy arose Dods tried to choose the most practical approach to their solution. Verse 19:14 states that

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1. This also appears in The Expositor's Greek Testament, Vol. I, p. 854.
 2. Dods, Lecture MS. "John IV", p. 102. See also The Expositor's Greek Testament, Vol. I, p. 713.

Christ's crucifixion took place "about the sixth hour," that is, about twelve o'clock. But Mark (15:25) said "it was the third hour and they crucified him." Dods' solution was simple and logical. He concluded that if the crucifixion took place midway between nine and twelve o'clock, it was quite natural that one observer should refer it to the former, while another referred it to the latter hour. The height of the sun in the sky was the index of the time of day; while it was easy to know whether it was before or after midday, or whether the sun was more or less than halfway between the zenith and the horizon, finer distinctions of time were not recognizable without consulting the sun-dials, which were not everywhere at hand. The Apostles had no means of avoiding the difficulty as to whether it was the third or the sixth hour when the sun was near mid-heaven, and they cared very little about the point.

Because Dods spent so many years in close study of the Fourth Gospel and problems associated with it, he was in a much better position to understand the nature of the first Epistle of John. Many nineteenth century scholars believed this Epistle to have no continuous theme, to run in circles, and to appear almost unintelligible. However, Dods, who sympathetically looked at it from John's position and point of view, easily found the theme and the consistency and the normalcy of it. He recognized that "John was a man of brooding mind and he that would drink in the essence and spirit of his writings must be content to brood upon them." He also discerned that the Hebraistic mode of thought and expression was never

discarded by the Galilean fisherman, who progressed by laying thought alongside thought, and left the reader to form the connection between the thoughts.¹ The relation of this Epistle to the Fourth Gospel was obvious to Dods, and he did not doubt that the two were from one hand.

We have the same profound truths uttered in simplest words in both. We have the same disregard of the outer courts of theology and direct entrance into the penetralia of the Divine Life. We feel the same spirit breathing through the whole: the same uncompromising separation of light from darkness, God and the World....The Epistle indeed so leans upon the Gospel that it might quite reasonably be supposed to be a doctrinal postscript to the Gospel.²

Although archaeological discoveries have made it possible for his commendaries to be superseded by modern interpreters, Dods' writings on the Gospel of John were considered by many in his own day as Scotland's best statement of the Johannine problem,³ and his expositions still can be read with great profit.

The Epistle to the Hebrews.

Throughout his lectures, especially those on the Epistle to the Hebrews, there can be detected in the professor a humble confidence--that type of unassuming confidence which issues from a background of wide knowledge and experience. This unpretentious assurance was a vital part of Dods' teaching just as it had been a vital part of his preaching. It inspired confidence in those who listened. Henry Drummond's analysis of his preaching was no less true of his teaching.

1. Dods, Lecture MS., "I John", p. 4.

2. Ibid., p. 8.

3. Critical Review, 8:92, 1898.

There stood and spoke a man who knew Christianity in all its length and breadth, who faced its deepest problems without fear, who evaded no difficulty, who kept nothing back, yet whose faith was positive, whose voice was certain, whose creed was weighed with realities and verities, and whose message came home to all honest hearts with a practical effect most irresistible and solemn. The mere fact of such a man doing such work was a tower of strength to the community.¹

Dods' himself once said, "Faith is much more a matter of contagion than we are sometimes disposed to admit, and where there is strong religious vitality it will find its way through almost any medium."² Reading his lectures on "Hebrews" leaves one with the impression that those who heard them were aided not only by the information therein, but also by the attitude of the professor.

The Epistle to the Hebrews was expounded by Dods with a constant regard to the Greek text, although the lectures themselves contained less Greek than did the lectures on the Epistle to the Galatians.³

Having already written an introduction to this epistle in 1888 for his book, An Introduction to the New Testament, Dods simply expanded this material into an excellent introductory lecture for his students, portions of which were subsequently published in The Expositor's Greek Testament. James Denney considered this exposition of Hebrews "the most valuable thing

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1. The Expositor, Third Series, 10:68-69, 1889.
 2. Dods, Erasmus and Other Essays, pp. 319-320.
 3. Perhaps there was more exegetical material presented in class than the extant lecture manuscripts reveal. Dods' commentary on Hebrews which was published in The Expositor's Greek Testament made extensive use of the Greek, but this same treatment does not appear in the manuscripts. If, at the time of his death, such lecture manuscripts were on loan to the printer, the posthumous publication date (1910) may explain why the manuscripts were not returned.

Dods has given us."¹ The introductory lecture first traced the history of the epistle and the difficulties which this anonymous book had to overcome before it won for itself a place in the canon. Then, came an interesting treatment of the internal evidence of its authorship. Dods' grasp of classical as well as New Testament Greek gave much additional weight to his argument against the possibility of Pauline authorship. Unlike such scholars as Ritschl, Weiss, Renan, and Salmond who favored the acceptance of Barnabas as the author; or Harnack who urged the claims of Prisca and Aquila; or Bleek, Tholuck, Hilgenfeld, Reuss, Pfleiderer, and Farrar who considered the name of Apollos as its author, Dods preferred to present all the plausible arguments and withhold his own personal opinion. His conclusion was perhaps the most scholarly of all:

It is impossible then to dogmatise regarding the authorship of this Epistle, and at present it is best frankly to confess our ignorance....And if we cannot name, we can at least partially describe the author. For, his letter reveals a man who was not an Apostle but a scholar of the Apostles; a man of the second Christian generation; a Hellenist yet a member and teacher of a Jewish Christian church; a Paulinist with some tincture of Alexandrian culture, though his treatment of Scripture differs toto coelo from Philo's; a friend of Timothy and at the time of writing in the company of Italian Christians.²

His discussion of the destination of the epistle was equally

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1. James Denney, Letters of Principal James Denney to W. Robertson Nicoll 1893-1917, (London: Hodder and Stoughton Limited, 1920), p. 162.
 2. Dods, Lecture MS. "Hebrews I", p. 15. See also The Expositor's Greek Testament, (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1910), Vol. IV, pp. 234-5, and Dods' An Introduction to the New Testament, p. 181.

fair in its presentation of different opinions; however, it was evident that Dods himself could not fully accept any of the four places most generally approved as the destination of the epistle.¹ He spared no effort in trying to give his students a thorough knowledge of the background of this Epistle, the importance of which he stated in one of his small handbooks for Bible classes.

Unless we stand in a writer's point of view, what was perfectly lucid and definite to him is confused or vague to us. Without understanding a writer's aim, we may derive much information from his book; but we shall certainly miss many of his points, and be at a distinct disadvantage as readers.²

Exposition.³ His brief section on Hebrews 2:5ff provides an example of his skilful way of treating a passage difficult to understand due to minor obscurities or to present-day unfamiliarity with the circumstances involved. First he expressed his idea of the mental habits and concepts of the Jews who received the epistle. This in turn helped to explain why the author of Hebrews referred to the eighth Psalm. Then Dods introduced a parenthetical statement which was intended to give the student another approach to the author's argument. Finally, he enriched the whole exposition with two references to contemporary scientists.

In order to appreciate the following argument for the necessity and propriety of the Incarnation (Humiliation) of the Son we must put ourselves as far as we can in the mental attitude of the Jewish contemporaries of our Lord.⁴ Some of

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1. Jerusalem, Antioch, Caesarea, and Rome.
 2. Dods, The Book of Genesis, (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1882), p. v.
 3. Eighteen of the twenty lecture manuscripts were devoted to Exposition but only one brief section is here treated.
 4. Being in their second year under Dods, those who heard this lecture were well aware of the importance of doing so, but Dods took this opportunity to remind them of its necessity.

them had probably seen Jesus; they had seen that His face and figure, his dress and walk and manner of speech were not conspicuously distinguished from those of other men. They had seen how little He impressed many of those with whom He came in contact; how feeble, to all appearance, He was in the hands of those who arrested, scourged and crucified Him. They knew not what to say when such things were cast up to them; nay their own mind continually reflected how strange it was that all the glory of the old dispensation should have terminated in the criminal's cross. They could not wipe from their imagination the figure of Jesus as He had been dragged to execution, and they could not but contrast that spent and worn and drooping figure, that wan and sad face, the heart-rending cry from the cross, with the brilliancy and power of the angels who in old times had been God's messengers.

Already the Author has shown that Christ, the Son of God, is immeasurably superior to angels. But a Jew would naturally say, Why was this glory of the Son not apparent? This Jesus, being the Son of God, as I would fain believe He was, why did He not come in a manner fitted to illustrate His glory? Why, at least, did He not come as an angel? Why did he come on a level with ourselves, human, poorly born, growing up in a working man's little village shop, not even effecting the political changes such as the old prophets achieved?¹

Thus, with his extraordinary ability to sympathize with the Jew and to understand the problems which the Jew faced in considering Jesus as the Messiah, Dods gave his students a clearer conception of the situation which was before the writer of the epistle. From this vantage point they could more easily see why it was appropriate for the author of the epistle to remind those wavering Jews that human nature had always been destined to rank higher than the angelic in the Messianic Kingdom.

In order then to make good his point that the future or Messianic world is not subjected to angels the writer cites the 8th Psalm in which man is magnified. "Some one somewhere testified," he says, not as if he could not lay his finger on the passage but because the human authorship was a matter of indifference to him, and because it was a common usage with literary men thus to cite their authorities.²

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1. Dods, Lecture MS., "Hebrews IV", p. 1.
 2. Ibid., p. 2.

Here Dods, anticipating a question which might arise in the student's mind regarding the author's failure to be specific, disposed of it by pointing out that this omission was the accepted and expected practice of that day. Commenting on Psalm 8 he said:

The passage cited is an exclamation of astonishment that man should have been so richly endowed. It is a picture of man's primeval condition, the Biblical idea of Adam, man as God made him. Not to angels had God subjected the eternal human order, but Scripture says What is man that thou art mindful of him...to him has Thou subjected all things, and therefore the world to come. And then the writer applies this to Christ.

Now, before considering the bearing of the argument, it may first of all be observed that the writer is quite justified in interpreting what was said of man by the light which Christ's experience sheds on it.¹

In this way Dods paused to call attention to an inconspicuous point which might have been overlooked by his students.

Probably his readers had never before thought of finding so full a meaning in the Psalm. When they read "Thou didst put all things under his feet" they considered the words the loose and exaggerating expression of a poet. Indeed the Psalmist himself is only bold enough to understand them of man's supremacy over sheep and oxen. Was not man rather the victim than the master of the elements, Must he not continually feel and acknowledge his helplessness in presence of the great forces of nature, and is he not compelled to lament his weakness in presence of disease and death? But this writer shows us that we must judge of man by Christ. All promises and grants made to man must expand themselves to fit Christ and must be interpreted by the meaning which His experience gives to them. His becoming man first gives us the true measure of man's capabilities and destiny.²

Dods' next paragraph incorporated the opinions of scientists.

Modern science tells us that same truth as the 8th Psalm does, although in different language; it tells us, at any rate, that man is the goal of creation....Mr. Alfred Russell Wallace in his book Man's Place In the Universe said that the new astronomy had shown that the stellar universe, though of enormous extent, is yet finite and its

1. Ibid., p. 3.

2. Ibid.

extent determinable. Mr. Wallace concluded from a consideration of the facts that "there is no inconceivability--no improbability even--in the conception that, in order to produce a world that should be precisely adapted in every detail for the orderly development of organic life culminating in man, such a vast and complex universe as that which we know exists around us, may have been absolutely required.".... A better commentary of the 8th Psalm, a more convincing exhibition of man's real dignity or a better basis for a plea for the incarnation could not be desired.

John Fiske in his book on The Destiny of Man, and speaking in the name of science declared that evolution or the cosmical movement has thus far been up to man; that man being produced, evolution can produce no higher creature, but must now spend itself in bringing man to perfection, not in producing out the human race a still higher race of beings, but in refining and strengthening and perfecting men themselves.

Why science has not accepted Christ as the spring and source of this new line of evolution, I do not know, unless it be the fear of seeming religious. Certainly the relation of Christ to the evolution of man is capable of scientific treatment for He has introduced into the race precisely those elements of further progress which before His appearance it lacked.¹ He has introduced a new type of humanity and in his own person has exhibited the ideal manhood. It is for this purpose our Author here uses Christ. You cannot, he says, understand man separate from Christ, because separate from Christ you cannot see man's destiny or capacity.

It is not difficult to understand why the lectures on the Epistle to the Hebrews displayed some of Dods' most penetrating insights. The Epistle was written by one whose favorite admonition, "consider Christ," was the same as Dods'. It was also written to a people who resembled those to whom Dods often preached--Christians who were drifting away from boldness of hope and intensity of faith. The New College lectures, therefore, reveal a remarkable sympathy with the writer of an Epistle whose aim was to open up the true significance of Christ and His work, and thus to remove the scruples, hesitations and suspicions which haunted the minds of his fellow Christians.

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1. As a close friend of Henry Drummond, Professor of Natural Science, Dods no doubt had discussed this scientific approach on many occasions.
 2. Dods, Lecture MS., "Hebrews IV", p. 3b.

CHAPTER FIVE

HIS TEACHING MINISTRY AS A PROFESSOR (Continued)

I. NEW TESTAMENT THEOLOGY COURSES

When Dods became a professor New Testament Theology was itself a study of recent growth. Yet it had attracted a large proportion of the scholarship and investigation which was being applied to theological subjects. Its aim was to ascertain with precision what each writer of the New Testament taught and to exhibit his doctrine in its historical connection and development. It was regarded as a purely historical study which should start without dogmatic bias because its first object was to determine what the New Testament writers taught, not to discover whether their teaching was in agreement with this or that symbol of any church.

Dods regarded this new approach to the study of the New Testament as the result of a more reasonable view of inspiration.

So long as the New Testament was virtually accepted as merely Divine, the work of one Author, a text book equally important in all its parts, justice could not be done to the variety exhibited not only in the style but in the view of truth, and in the interpretation of Christ. But with the growth of our idea of inspiration there has grown the apprehension of the differences introduced into the New Testament by the idiosyncrasies of its human authors¹

All through the history of the Church men have been drawn to Christ on various grounds. Men vary in their spiritual and intellectual needs, and one man finds in Christ what another

1. Dods, Lecture MS., "Teaching of Jesus I," p. 1.

does not seek. "The New Testament writers," said Dods, "were not exempt from such varieties of disposition, of taste, of aptitude." Not one of them perceived the whole significance of Christ's revelation. "To one His righteous life appealed more powerfully than His atoning death; to another His human nature seemed as instructive and significant as His Divine."¹

Teaching of Jesus.

In the introduction to his course on the Teaching of Jesus, Dods explained that although the teaching of Jesus was usually treated as one section of New Testament theology, Jesus' teaching was not one of many. His teaching does not rank alongside of that of the New Testament writers, for it is the source or root of them all. Had he not taught, their mouths were shut. "Had He not been, we should never have known that such men as Paul, John, Peter or the wonderful nameless author of Hebrews had ever existed. But this only makes it all the more important that we should consider His teaching in separation from what was afterwards made of it."² The others would have been horrified had it been possible to convict them of teaching anything which was not contained, at least by implication, in their Master's teaching.

On the other hand, Dods warned, each scholar must be on guard against allowing his knowledge of apostolic doctrine to influence his interpretation of Christ's words. He is much more likely to find too much than too little in them. This

1. Ibid., p. 2.

2. Ibid.

must be avoided, for when it is permitted it defeats the very end and purpose of such study.

It is the peculiar advantage of New Testament teaching that by segregating each writer his special views are more distinctly visible. Not expecting to find in each writer the whole truth, we are more content to accept what he says in its natural, historical meaning. And in studying our Lord's words we must not expect to find all that we find in Paul. As He himself said, "I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now, howbeit, when He, the Spirit of truth is come, He will guide you into all truth."¹

Jesus, then, did not explain all that men were afterwards to find in His revelation. Their own spiritual experience was to open the eyes of the Apostles and others to much in the Lord which He Himself had left unexplained. And that spiritual experience was necessarily embryonic and wholly immature until they learned how to construe a Christ who had been crucified and a Redeemer from death who Himself had died.

We are likely to find, then, in the teaching of Jesus other contents and another method than that which we find in the Apostolic writings. Jesus came to reveal God and His will, and necessarily He did so more by the character he manifested and the actions He did than by His words. It was the Apostolic function to interpret His revelation. Had our Lord not forgiven sins and manifested the Divine forgiveness in His death, had He not shown in His own demeanour towards sinners that God sought the salvation of all, Paul could never have formulated a theory of justification. The writers of the New Testament do no more than interpret to us the significance of what our Lord did and said.²

Before considering the substance of Christ's teaching and endeavouring to arrange and understand it, Dods presented to the students his answers to the following questions: Was teaching an essential element in Christ's mission? What relation

1. Ibid., p. 3.

2. Ibid.

does His teaching bear to His life, death and resurrection? Can we hope to gather a satisfactory conception of His teaching from the fragmentary records of it we possess? Did His teaching differ materially from that of the Old Testament and other sages of the old world? What is it that lends authority to His teaching? Dods divided this preliminary material into five sections: (1) the importance of His teaching as an essential element of His mission; (2) the sources from which we can learn what Jesus taught; (3) its originality; (4) its authority; and (5) its form. Only three of these sections need to be considered here.

In dealing with the importance of Christ's teaching in relation to His mission, Dods followed a practice he first used in preaching and used even more in lecturing--that of trying to anticipate and answer in advance the students' questions. For example, he realized how, from the circumstance that Jesus wrote no book, it might be inferred that Jesus minimized the value of His teaching, and even meant to turn men's thoughts from what He had said to what He was and did. To avoid this wholly misleading inference, the professor called attention to the fact that neither Socrates nor Buddha wrote books. Also, he explained that Jesus became a teacher by the native perspicacity of His own mind and the weight of His judgments on men and their conduct. Even though teaching had formed no necessary part of His function as the Christ, yet as a person passing through human life and speaking freely to other men regarding its various interests and issues, He must everywhere have scattered germs of thought and shed fresh light on the problems which are perennially emerging in the human mind.

"He who carried always in His mind the essential principles of human well-being could not but impart the knowledge of these as He conversed with men confronted by the eternal problems and difficulties."¹

The teaching of Jesus, Dods declared, held a prominent place in Jesus' ministry. Those who accompanied Him called Him not King, Physician, Redeemer, but Teacher. And although to us this aspect of His mission may be somewhat veiled by the scantiness of the record, it was conspicuous and predominant to His contemporaries. The designation of His followers was *μαθηταί*, learners, scholars, disciples, while they constantly addressed him as *Διδάσκαλε* or *Κυριότα*. This relationship He approved: "Ye call me teacher (*διδάσκαλος*) and Lord; and you are right, for so I am (John 13:13 R.S.V.).

The relation of Christ's teaching to His whole mission could be better seen, Dods felt, if consideration were given to the way in which it revealed itself through His character and life.² The essential purpose of His coming was to reveal God and to establish His kingdom on earth. He revealed God by living a perfect human life, representing in Himself the holiness and love of God, and by obeying God as His loving Father. "He actualized God, reproducing in His own life the character and will of God to men."³

1. *Ibid.*, p. 4.

2. See the concluding section of Chapter II which indicates the importance Dods placed on the teaching power of one's life. This emphasis occupied an important place in Dods' preaching.

3. Dods, Lecture MS., "Teaching of Jesus I," p. 6.

Mere verbal instruction would have carried little conviction. To say that God was spotlessly holy and unweariedly loving would have fallen on deaf ears, but when they were confronted with one who Himself was absolute in holiness and love the effect was different. They were convincingly taught when they saw the compassion and power of God brought into contact with their own actual conditions.

Dods also mentioned a second characteristic of Jesus' teaching which illustrated its relation to His ministry as a whole. Jesus used his teaching as an explanation of His actions. He taught by His actions but He did not always leave men to draw their own conclusions from what He did. For example, He kept company with sinners, but in explanation of His conduct He uttered three parables. In emphasizing this aspect of Jesus' teaching, Dods was in agreement with Holtzmann who said, "His teaching is indeed not His life work, but it is the indispensable commentary upon it."¹

One of the distinctive notes then of our Lord's teaching, which differentiates it from that of some of the greatest teachers, is that it shines out through His person and life as clearly as and more convincingly than from His words, and that his words are for the most part explanatory of what he was and was doing.

If we ask what gave His teaching its impressiveness, its unique and abiding influence, the answer must be, that He not only pointed out the way of life but led in it, that He was Himself the embodiment of His teaching, and illustrated the necessity and possibility of attaining the

1. "Seine Lehre ist zwar nicht sein Lebenswerk selbst, wohl aber der unentbehrliche Commentar dazu." Heinrich Julius Holtzmann, Lehrbuch der Neutestamentlichen Theologie (Leipzig: J.C.B. Mohr, 1897), p. 126.

ideal He preached.¹

The complicated and difficult question of the authority of Christ's teaching was admirably handled by Dods. It seemed to him that the kind of authority which was claimed for Christ was the authority of an ambassador. "Our Lord always claimed a delegated authority. He spoke for one who sent Him. In short He claimed authority to speak for God."² The prophets also had done so, but Jesus claimed to utter the whole mind of God to man. And this claim He substantiated by manifesting in His life His understanding of God's mind and His unity with Him.

When the people heard Him speak, the impression made upon them was that He spoke as one having authority and not as the scribes. This contrast with the scribes is remarkable, because if any men ever were anxious to speak with authority it was the Jewish scribes. They spoke with the authority which belonged to certified instructors who had been approved by examiners and had entered into a closed profession. What then had the people in mind when they distinguished Jesus' teaching from that of the scribes? Dods thought that probably they had in their minds two features of His speech. In the first place, the Evangelists interpreted the meaning of the remark as referring to the results which followed the words of Christ in the cure of the diseased and the expulsion of demons. His words were not idle; they accomplished something. His word was like the word of a commanding officer. It was immediately followed by obedience. In the second place, they felt a new kind of urgency in His words; the

1. Dods, Lecture MS., "Teaching of Jesus I," p. 8.

2. Dods, Lecture MS., "Teaching of Jesus II," p. 1.

urgency of one who knows He is uttering God's message to man. His authority was felt in what He said. People felt that His words were true and went to the very root of their conduct and idea of God. His words brought them face to face with God. His teaching was self-evidencing in the conscience of those who heard him. They were constrained to say, "Thou has the words of eternal life."

Jesus spoke of many things over and above the essential elements of the Gospel. Some of His statements cannot be tested, such as those regarding the mode of judgment or the abolition of sex in the future life. In regard to these, one naturally asks what authority had Christ to make these affirmations. It seemed to the Professor that the answer must be that living as He did in perfect fellowship with God, Jesus had insight into the conditions of spiritual life and of the mind of God such as no one else could possibly enjoy. This, however, leads to the question, were there any limitations to the knowledge of Jesus and if so what were they? In seeking an answer, Dods was reverent but resolute.

It is with no light heart one can approach the subject of the limitations of our Lord's knowledge. Any discussion regarding matters which closely touch his person is necessarily entered upon with reverence and with hesitation. And yet we may be sure that He who is the truth desires nothing more earnestly than that we should know the full truth about Himself. We must enter on the enquiry not in the attitude of those who are conscious of taking an undue liberty but rather under the pressure of that constraint which Christ Himself puts upon us to seek for the truth that we may live in it. Into such an enquiry as this, above all things it is quite possible to carry a spirit of genuine worship.¹

The authority of Christ as the revealer of the Father is

1. Ibid., p. 4.

beyond question. The revelation of God which Jesus carried in His own person and actions is self-authenticating, Dods contended. It cannot be assailed and it need not be defended by anything beyond itself. We have this solid foundation to begin upon and this always to fall back upon. But it is of value to institute enquiry into the extent of His authority. Just because we yield Him the homage of our conscience and are prepared to yield Him our life, we are constrained to ask whether we must accept as final every opinion He held, every word He uttered. Being human, was He subject to the invariable limitations of human knowledge, and liable to the errors from which no man is wholly free? If He was not subject to the universal human limitations, can He be said to have been truly man? If He was subject to such limitations, how can we trust the information He gave regarding things unseen? Dods conveyed the impression that probably no questions suggested by the study of the Gospels are at once more vital and more difficult than these. Yet he brought them before his students not in the expectation that a completely satisfactory answer could be given, but rather with the purpose of emphasizing certain data which must guide men in formulating their answers. He assisted his students in facing these problems by reminding them of the treatment these questions received in the early centuries. For instance, in considering the questions, "How is the human nature through which Jesus thinks and speaks guaranteed against error? Is it so guaranteed?", he quoted Newman's notes on the Treatises of Athanasius against Arianism:

Though our Lord, as having two natures, had a human as well as a divine knowledge, and though that human knowledge was not only limited because human, but liable to ignorance in matters in which greater knowledge was

possible; yet it is the doctrine of the Church, that in fact He was not ignorant, even in His human nature, according to its capacity, since it was from the first taken out of its original and natural condition, and "deified" by its union with the Word....So though He took on Him a soul which, left to itself, had been partially ignorant, as other human souls, yet as ever enjoying the beatific vision from its oneness with the Word, it never was ignorant really, but knew all things which a human soul can know.¹

Dods considered this an admirable statement of the view more or less consciously held by the Church. The human nature of Jesus was irradiated, informed by the Divine, so that to its utmost capacity it was filled with the knowledge possessed by the Logos. However, he recognized that Athanasius was not always consistent. When the Arians, in support of their belief, adduced the fact that Jesus sometimes asked for information and explicitly confessed ignorance of the day when this world's history should be closed, Athanasius replied,

It is plain to every one that the flesh is ignorant, but the Word Himself, considered as the Word, knows all things before they come to be. For He did not, when He became man, cease to be God, nor, although God, does He shrink from what is man's, perish the thought, but rather, being God, He has taken to Him the flesh, and being the flesh "deifies" the flesh. He knew where Lazarus lay and yet He asked.²

Of course, Dods explained that the idea of a professed ignorance alongside of a real knowledge introduces an intolerable artificiality into one's conception of Christ and prevents one from thinking of Christ as a real person who can be understood.

After presenting the views of the early church on these problems and the reasons why some of the early theories must be discarded, he led his students in search of a more satisfactory

1. Ibid., p. 6.

2. Ibid., p. 7.

solution (a) by examining the statements in the Gospels which bear upon the knowledge of Christ and its limitations, (b) by considering how the facts there indicated square with the doctrine of the Incarnation,¹ and (c) by endeavoring to discover how Christ's infallibility as a teacher in divine things is safeguarded. The first of these steps deserves attention because of its striking resemblance to his early sermons on the life of Christ.

In the Gospels one meets with certain statements regarding Jesus' growth from childhood to manhood which seem to imply that at one time in His Life He did not know what afterwards He knew; that His faculties required the same training and His mind the same inculcation of learning as are required by the mental faculties of the ordinary man. In the Gospel of Luke (2:52) occurs a positive statement which is meant to cover the whole period of His early development. "Jesus advanced in wisdom and stature and in favour with God and men." This statement is evidently intended to picture to the reader the development of Jesus in physical, mental, and spiritual attainment. It is true that *σοφία* in Biblical language is a moral as much as an intellectual quality but here, Dods argued, it would seem to refer to the thoughtfulness of the growing youth into whose mind fresh material was continually being introduced.

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1. In his early years as a professor, Dods began his lectures on the Teaching of Jesus with a lecture on the Doctrine of the Incarnation. But in later years he rearranged the order, so that his discussion of the Incarnation followed a preliminary treatment of the limitations of Christ's knowledge. This enabled him to dispense with many explanatory statements already covered in the preliminary lecture.

As in this same chapter Luke speaks of Him, first as τὸ βρέφος (2:16), then as τὸ παιδίον (2:40), then Ἰησοῦς ὁ παῖς (2:43), and finally as Ἰησοῦς (2:52); in the word προέκοπτεν he means us to understand that He did not always remain at the same stage of attainment but went from less to more.¹

Luke 2:46² implies that Jesus learned from others. Dods said it also seems to imply that in matters not directly concerning His mission Jesus would accept what was taught him. For example, He would ascribe the Psalms to such authors as were popularly credited with them, and would accept such views of the world as were received by the scribes. Otherwise, reasoned the professor, it is impossible to understand why Jesus should have asked for information.

After he grew to manhood Jesus was still dependent on others for information regarding commonplace facts. When He asked where Lazarus had been buried, and when He turned in the crowd and asked who touched him, it would seem that such questions were asked for the purpose of receiving information in the normal human way. Also, on those occasions where γινώσκει or ἐπιγινώσκει³ occurred it seems evident that Jesus arrived at knowledge which He previously did not have. The same inference must be drawn from all reference to His surprise or indignation. The Professor concluded his treatment of this idea with one of his opinionated paragraphs:

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1. These Greek words Dods translated: "the babe," "the child," "the boy Jesus," "Jesus," and "increased."
 2. "They found him in the temple, sitting in the midst of the doctors, both hearing them and asking them questions."
 3. On those occasions where such expressions as "when Jesus knew" occurred.

The gospels, then, represent Jesus as acquiring knowledge in the usual way by enquiry and learning: they represent Him as passing from ignorance to knowledge, as sometimes being mistaken in trifling matters of fact, and as remaining ignorant in a point of great importance. There are, besides the instances I have cited, certain others which seem to me scarcely so certain in their meaning... Our Lord speaks of the experience of Jonah as if it formed part of a true history of fact; he also ascribes the 110th Psalm to David, and He speaks of His return as if it were to occur within a few years from His resurrection; he also ascribes to demoniacal possession diseases which arise from physical causes. But there are elements in all these instances which make us hesitate to use them as evidence.¹

Dods' elaborate treatment of the humanity of Jesus is partly explained by the fact that it was his favorite subject and one with which he was well acquainted. The Renfield Free Church congregation heard numerous sermons containing much of the same information which his students received in these lectures. In fact, the above section strongly resembles his 1868 sermon on "Christ's Life in Nazareth."

In regard to the form of Christ's teaching, Dods devoted much time to a consideration of the parable, (1) its nature, (2) its claim to be a source of doctrine, (3) Christ's motive or motives in using this form of teaching, (4) the classification of the parables, and (5) their interpretation. He defined the parable as "a brief fictitious story framed for the purpose of illustrating and enforcing a truth or principle, by showing its action in common life."²

For the purpose of determining doctrine he said the parables could be divided into two classes--those which illustrate a truth

1. Dods, Lecture MS., "Teaching of Jesus II," p. 12.

2. Dods, Lecture MS., "Teaching of Jesus III," p. 11.

in the spiritual world by showing us the same truth in the world we already see or know, (e.g., the parable of the lost sheep,) and those in which the thing itself is presented and not just a likeness of it, (e.g., the parable of the good samaritan.) Those of the latter group present directly the actual truth to be taught in the sphere in which the application is intended. They, he maintained, are sources of doctrine. By making this distinction, and showing the nature of those of the latter class, he presented valid grounds for differing from Trench and others who said that parables could not be made first sources and seats of doctrine.¹ In fact Dods' only reason for classifying the parables in this way was to show why he accepted the parable as a source of doctrine. He actually preferred a simple historical division--early, intermediate, and late. He was not enthusiastic about this division in the way that A.B. Bruce was about his method of dividing the parables into the theoretic, the evangelic, and the prophetic. J.P. Lange divided them into three cycles, those showing the historical development of the Kingdom of God, those depicting the government of divine grace, those depicting God's judicial righteousness.

Dods discerned three distinct uses which Jesus made of parables. The first was the obvious and expected use---the illustration of truth. The second use of the parable was to introduce unwelcome truth into the mind under a slight veil. The third use was to conceal the truth from a certain class in the community.

1. Trench's Notes on the Parables (1841) was the standard work on the parables in the mid-nineteenth century.

This third distinction was radically opposed to the view held by Adolf Jülicher, who in some respects was the most thorough of the contemporary scholars who had written upon the subject of the parables.¹ Jülicher with much elaboration criticized the view that Christ uttered His parables with the intention of veiling His meaning. He contended that on all occasions and to all manner of hearers Jesus used parables to bring the truth clearly before the mind. He admitted that they did effect a judicial hardening but not as Dods supposed for they were not intended to harden. Jülicher regarded the entire account of the conversation of the disciples with Jesus recorded in Mark 4:10-13 as an attempt on the part of the Evangelist to explain Jesus' use of what seemed to him hard to understand. He concluded his examination of this text by saying,

One thing or the other: either the simple, mere aim to produce hardening levelled at the masses--that and that alone--and with that the trustworthiness also of the Synoptic in this matter, or an erroneous inference on their part due to error in their premises, and the same object in the parables of our Lord which as every one feels parables elsewhere serve. This² either-or goes deep: either the Evangelist or Jesus.

On the other hand, Dods felt that however surprising this may at first sight appear, and however irreconcilable with the constant purpose of Christ to bring light and truth to the mind of all sorts of men, a little reflection will discover how reasonable and necessary Christ's method was. The point of His ministry at which

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1. Jülicher's book, Die Gleichnisreden Jesu, (Vol. I, 1888; Vol. II, 1899), was the most significant modern book on the parables until the appearance of C.H. Dodd's Parables of the Kingdom (1935) and Joachim Jeremias' Parables of Jesus (1947). Of course, A.B. Bruce's The Parabolic Teaching of Christ (1882) was a book of considerable influence along with that of Jülicher's.
 2. Adolf Jülicher, Die Gleichnisreden Jesu, Vol. I, (Freiburg: J.C.B. Mohr, 1888) p. 149.

He adopted the use of parables is significant. His first recorded parable was that of the Sower, the purpose of which was to account for the large proportion of failure that had attended His preaching of the Kingdom. It is a retrospective parable showing that He was looking back upon a period of His ministry and summing up its results; and the outburst of parables which marks this stage suggests that He found it impossible to continue the explicit proclamation of His Kingdom, even hazardous to describe in plain terms what the nature of His Kingdom was. He saw His audience visibly dividing into two sections--those on the one hand who had spiritual leanings and a disposition to listen to God's message; those on the other hand who had only been hardened against spiritual influences by His former teaching. The parable was a convenient form in which He could publicly utter truths which those of the one party were able to understand or at any rate would like to understand, while others would only be provoked.¹

Finally, Dods suggested two rules or principles for interpreting the parables. (1) Everything must be subordinated to the one lesson which the parable is meant to enforce. In the case of the parable where the teaching is complex this rule must be modified and the meaning of the various details must also be taken into account. (2) As far as possible avoid all minute explanation of the natural objects which are mentioned in the parable.

1. Dods, Lecture MS., "Teaching of Jesus III," p. 19.

Theme of our Lord's Teaching. In his introductory lecture on the theme of Christ's teaching Dods set forth the Kingdom of God as the category or title under which all of Christ's teaching could be placed. Jesus' teaching, like that of the epoch-making men who have introduced some new element into the permanent inheritance of mankind, was determined and regulated by His aim. "His practical aim," declared Dods, "was to establish the Kingdom of God on earth: it was to invite all men to God in indissoluble bonds; to bring man and God together as forming one Kingdom, and as together having unity of interest and of aim."¹ Behind this, as its motive, lay the Fatherhood of God, but only occasionally and incidentally, did Jesus speak of His aim as being to form men into one family. He preferred to develop the idea of the Kingdom.

The Kingdom of God was a new emphasis in Biblical studies of the nineteenth century.² Until Biblical Theology became a separate study, the idea of the Kingdom of God had been neglected. While the absence of this topic from systems of theology was not a fatal blemish, because the same view of God and of man presented by Jesus in connection with the Kingdom of God was elaborately given by systematic theologians in other connections, there were ideas and aspects of truth suggested by the presentation of the Kingdom of God which were of particular benefit. Dods, for instance, recognized its value in freeing the age in which he lived from an over-emphasis on the individual.

1. Dods, Lecture MS., "Theme of Our Lord's Teaching--The Kingdom," p. 1.

2. Probably it was the employment of the idea by Kant which brought it prominently before the theological and philosophical world. Moreover, Ritschl exploited to the full the idea of the Kingdom of God.

Now the true corrective of all selfish individualism in religion, of thinking to please God by pampering our own soul instead of by giving ourselves to the help and service of our fellows, is found in the idea that Christ came--to save the individual? yes, certainly, but to save the individual that a Kingdom might be formed and that salvation consists in entrance into that Kingdom in which the interests of the Kingdom eclipse the interests of the individual.¹

This same idea occurred in Dods' sermons six years before he became a professor. For example, his sermon on "The Unforgiving Debtor," (Matt. 18:23-35) contained these words:

We are not perhaps too much but we are too exclusively taken up with the saving of our own souls. We neglect to consider that the Bible throughout takes to do with the Church and people of God, with the kingdom, and with the individual only as a member of the kingdom. It is not for the individual alone that Christ legislates. He does not point out a path by which one man by himself can attain to a solitary bliss; but He founds a kingdom, and lays down as its fundamental law the law of love, a law which shows us that our individual happiness and our individual perfection can only be won in fellowship with others, and by truly entering into the most enduring bonds with them. To unite us again individually to God, our Lord recognises as only half² His work: to unite us to one another is as essential.

He also felt that the new emphasis on the Kingdom of God placed the Church and Christian men on trial in a way that was more helpful because the new test applied to them was no longer the very easily satisfied one of an orthodox creed or of outward religious observance, but the severer and truer test of carrying the message of salvation to the miserable, crushed, and abandoned among their fellowmen. Dods regarded this step in ethical development which his generation had taken as one of the greatest that had ever been taken, for men and actions were measured not by their

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1. Ibid., p. 5. This point was given fuller treatment in his lecture on the sociological method of Jesus.
 2. Dods, The Parables of Our Lord (Matthew), (Edinburgh: Macniven & Wallace, 1883), p. 148.

sentimental value nor by any ethereal unearthly standard but by the plain and sure test of the service they rendered to men at large.¹

At the close of the nineteenth century various scholars were declaring that the contents of the teaching of Jesus could be classed under the general theme of the Kingdom of God. A.B. Bruce said, "The doctrine of Christ in these gospels is the doctrine of the Kingdom of God. Under this category all may be ranged; there is no other entitled to be placed above it, or that does not easily find a place under it....I have no hesitation therefore in regarding the Kingdom of God as an exhaustive category."² On the other hand, Dr. James Kidd, in his Kerr Lectures vigorously contested this view and maintained that neither the idea of the Fatherhood of God, nor that of salvation could be brought under this heading, and he also showed that the use of the term by Jesus himself was not habitual.³ James Orr in an Appendix to his Kerr Lectures was perhaps more successful in exhibiting the incompetency of this one idea to govern the whole of Christ's teaching when he showed that those who attempted to bring all the topics of theology under this head either overlooked many aspects which belong to a full system of theology, or they took in some material which was

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1. As a result of this new emphasis on the Kingdom of God, there developed in Britain, India, and the United States various non-denominational societies such as "The Christian Kingdom Society" whose object it was to extend "the Kingdom of heaven upon earth by the promotion of personal holiness, national righteousness, and a spirit of sympathy and unity among Christians." Alexander H. Smith, The Christian Kingdom Society, Circular V, (London), p.1.
 2. A.B. Bruce, The Kingdom of God (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1889), pp. 40-41.
 3. James Kidd, Morality and Religion (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1895), pp. 337-357.

only connected with this idea in the lowest way.¹ For this reason he doubted the possibility or desirability of making the Kingdom of God the all-embracing, all-dominating conception of Christian theology. James Stalker in his Cunningham Lectures of 1899 took the extreme position of opposing the use of the term, regarding it as archaic or obsolete.

The attempt to revive this term seems to be mistaken. We are very remote now from the world to which it belonged. To many Christians, living under republican forms of government, the very name of a King or a Kingdom is something foreign and out of date. Whatever may be the case in Germany, to our ears the phrase as a name for Christianity has a sound of preciousness and make-believe; and there are far better names for the same thing. The attempt to revive it is due to a mistaken reverence for Christ, as if the repetition of His mere words were obligatory upon Christians; it is a return from the spirit to the letter, an attempt to force thought back into a form which it has long outgrown.²

Nevertheless Dods considered that "the Kingdom of God is the category under which all [Jesus'] teaching can best be reduced."³ He favored the term because it so aptly conveyed the idea of God's conception of what earth should be. "Moreover," he said "it entered so largely into the thought of Christ that we cannot understand either His work or His teaching unless we first understand His view of the Kingdom."⁴ By announcing that He came to establish the Kingdom of God, Jesus clearly showed that this was the most comprehensive aspect under which the end and consummation of human

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1. James Orr, The Christian View of God and the World, Third Edition (Edinburgh: Andrew Elliot, 1897) pp. 351-361.
 2. James Stalker, The Christology of Jesus (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1899) pp. 166-7.
 3. Dods, Lecture MS., "Theme of Our Lord's Teaching--The Kingdom," p. 3.
 4. Ibid., p. 8.

history can be viewed. And having this aim in view, a great part of His teaching was necessarily governed by this idea and unquestionably a full treatment of this theme must form an essential part of any treatment of the teaching of Jesus. Dods, therefore, gave the foremost place in his New College lectures to the comprehensive subject of the Kingdom of God. Under this category he discussed the idea of God (whose Kingdom it is), the nature and state of man who is invited into the Kingdom, the conditions of entrance, the requirements of its laws, the relation of Jesus and His work to the Kingdom, the laws governing its growth, and the destiny that awaits it.

Prior to this discussion he briefly explained the equivalence of the Kingdom of God and the Kingdom of Heaven. After considering the views of Meyer, (who supposed that the term "heaven" indicated the seat or territory of the Kingdom,) Wellhausen, Holtzmann, and Keim, (who, in various ways, stated that the Kingdom of Heaven is the Kingdom which already exists in heaven and now from heaven takes its place among earthly things,) Dods stepped aside from them all to say that "the most probable explanation of the different use of these terms in the Synoptic Gospels is that Mark and Luke use the expression which would find readiest access to the Gentile minds, while Matthew writing for Jews retained that with which they were familiar and which most nearly represented the very words of our Lord."¹

Christ's conception of the Kingdom. Dods' investigation of Christ's conception of the Kingdom revolved around three questions. (1) By "Kingdom of God" did Jesus mean God's rule in the heart or in

1. Ibid., p. 11.

a community of men? (2) Was Christ's conception of the Kingdom purely spiritual, and if so how did He adjust His view to that of the prophets? (3) Did Jesus believe the Kingdom to be present or did He look for it to come in the future?

(1) By "Kingdom of God" did Jesus mean God's rule in the heart or in a community of men? Jesus used the term in both senses, Dods asserted. Furthermore, he said that two subordinate meanings can sometimes be detected in Christ's utterance: the Kingdom as perfectly realized in the future (e.g., Mark 7:21, 9:47, 14:25) and the Kingdom as the reward of Christ's people (e.g., the Beatitudes). He agreed with G.H. Gilbert of Chicago Theological Seminary, who regarded this term as a many-sided, rich, poetical symbol by which Jesus could give prominence to different aspects of it at different times.¹

(2) Was Christ's conception of the Kingdom purely spiritual, and if so how did He adjust His view to that of the prophets? "That our Lord's conception of the Kingdom was spiritual goes without saying."² It was a Kingdom to be won by spiritual forces, by convictions wrought in the heart, by the free action of the individual conscience. The formal proof of this was found in the Temptation, in which Jesus definitely and once for all rejected the idea of a Kingdom that was not spiritual; in the Beatitudes, which were themselves spiritual in their character and were to be found in spiritually qualified persons; and in the character of

1. G.H. Gilbert, The Revelation of Jesus, (London: The Macmillan Company, 1899), p. 33.

2. Dods, Lecture MS., "Teaching of Christ--Christ's Conception of the Kingdom," p. 7.

those who were chosen as its officials, men entirely unknown, uninfluential, uneducated. "Plainly there could have been in our Lord's mind, no intention of founding an earthly Kingdom."¹

How then did Jesus adjust this spiritual conception of the Kingdom to the predictions of the prophets who seemed to promise national prosperity and physical blessings? Certainly it was Jesus' conviction that He was fulfilling the prophets and all sound Messianic expectation based upon them, but the hopes of the people were so conspicuously fixed upon the external blessings of the Kingdom, to the exclusion of those spiritual blessings without which the external could not be permanent, that Jesus was compelled to sort the balance by putting aside the external and bringing the spiritual to the front. The prophets had likewise put righteousness in the foreground and been careful to insist upon the dependence of all earthly blessing upon true loyalty to God.

(3) Did Jesus believe the Kingdom to be present, or did He look for it to come in the future? Undoubtedly there are sayings of Jesus which seem clearly to express the belief that the Kingdom was already present and that it was to be slowly developed and matured. But in addition to these, other sayings seem to indicate that He held the eschatological views of the Apocalyptic writers; that is, that He expected the Kingdom to come suddenly, not as the result of a quiet social revolution, but by a Divine intervention abruptly terminating the present "age" and introducing the Messianic.

1. Ibid., p. 8.

When He said "There be some standing here who shall not taste of death till they see the Son of Man coming in His Kingdom" (Matt. 16:28), the natural interpretation certainly is that He expected to return shortly and that then his Kingdom was to be set up. When, at the Last Supper, he said: "I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's Kingdom" this also would seem to indicate that He expected after a short time to return.¹

So impressive did this aspect of the matter seem to some nineteenth and early twentieth century critics that they accepted the eschatological view as the determining one and interpreted in its light all other sayings. Thus, Shailer Mathews of Chicago, in his volume The Messianic Hope in the New Testament, said that a fair exegesis demanded that of the two uses of the term "Kingdom of God," the eschatological must be chosen as fundamental.² But Dods found it hard to accept this as a wholly satisfactory solution because Christ's work and teaching were not dependent upon any eschatological view, for when that view failed, the results of His work continued. Dods' own belief was that Jesus did not expect that the termination of this world's history was speedily to arrive, and that the coming he spoke of as imminent was "a spiritual coming in the gospel and in the power of the Holy Ghost."³

When Jesus spoke of His kingdom He spoke of a spiritual reign which came without observation. There was no part of His teaching on which He laid greater emphasis or which He was more careful to explain, knowing as He did that Jewish expectation ran counter to the acceptance of a merely spiritual kingdom. But as Jesus spiritualized the Messianic expectation in all other points, so the return on the clouds

1. Ibid., p. 16.

2. Shailer Mathews, The Messianic Hope in the New Testament, (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1905). This view was first explicitly stated by Johannes Weiss who also argued that in the Apostolic writings the expectation of a speedy return of Christ was fairly prominent and that this expectation was probably based on Christ's own words.

3. Dods, Lecture MS., "The Teaching of Jesus--Eschatology, 1., The Discourses," p. 8.

of heaven in the glory of the Father was spiritualized and was actually accomplished on the day of Pentecost. Throughout His earthly ministry we find Him at every stage repudiating earthly and visible glory, refusing to be made a leader of rebellion, declining to perform external wonders, finding the true Messianic throne on the cross and announcing with his latest breath that all was now accomplished; is it possible that all this transformation of the earthly and visible into a purely spiritual glory was leading up to a visible earthly return and a reign of might? Would this not have been to turn his whole life into a Christian preface to a Jewish poem? to make the humble and gentle Jesus the precursor of a Messiah terrible and violent?¹

The teaching of Jesus regarding himself. It is in Christ's actions and in the implications of His words, rather than in express statements, that His claims are found. "His method," explained Dods, "was to manifest Himself...and to allow the people through what they saw and heard to conclude what He was and whether He was such a Messiah as they required."² Jesus adopted the attitude of a final and absolute Redeemer of men, never pointing past Himself to some other who would come. He called men to Himself; He issued to them a law; He, in claiming to legislate for men, claimed also to be their Judge; and He represented Himself to men as able in every respect to satisfy their needs.

That Jesus from the first considered Himself the Messiah was proven by the attitude He assumed towards John the Baptist, whom He recognized as the forerunner of the Messiah. By permitting Himself to be proclaimed by the Baptist, He practically accepted the Messiahship. "His entire public life...presupposed this claim and proceeded upon this understanding."³

1. Ibid., p. 6.

2. Dods, "Lecture MS., "Teaching of Jesus--Regarding Himself," p. 9.

3. Ibid., p. 11.

In answering the question, "How did Jesus come to recognize Himself as the Messiah?" Dods revealed his own reverence for Christ.

Material for answering this enquiry as to the process by which it dawned upon Jesus that He was to be the founder of the Kingdom, may be found in one or two obvious facts. First of all it may be assumed that every devout Jew must have prayed and striven for the establishment of that Kingdom. It was the future of the believer in the Old Testament. But as early as reflection began in the mind of Jesus he was aware that in Him the Kingdom was already established. His consciousness was above all else a consciousness of God. He knew Himself to be in the most perfect harmony with God. It was the will of the Father which through Him and through all His words and works found expression. This already was the Kingdom of God, the perfect fellowship of God with man, the perfect devotedness of man to God. Conscious of no guilt, conscious only of a perfect trust in God and love for Him, He rejoiced in God and knew Him as His loving Father. Doubtless this harmonized with His own thought. Conscious of God's love He knew what men missed by sin and was driven by this knowledge and by His own love to devote His life to the restoring of man to God. He became the clear transparency through which God's love was seen by men and the clear channel through which the love of God found expression in all activities which could bless men. When the Baptist had roused in the people a craving for the Kingdom and its Messiah, Jesus felt that He could respond to this craving, that God had taken such possession of Him that He could bring God into touch with the people, could represent to them His will and draw them to Him. This determined too His conception of the Kingdom. Not in earthly joys or glory but in doing God's will was all His delight. The Kingdom therefore must be spiritual. Thus prepared He came to Baptism, to the rite by which the Forerunner was preparing a people for the King and there He was assured that He was equipped with all spiritual might for the great undertaking.¹

The appellation by which Jesus most often designated Himself was "the Son of Man," yet no one else used it of Him. This title did not pass into common use in the Church, but instead was displaced by the more explicit designation "the Christ." Dods assumed that both titles covered the same ground, consequently "the Son of Man" was no longer required when "the Christ" had

1. Ibid., p. 24.

become the current and recognized designation.¹ Considerable difference of opinion existed in the early twentieth century regarding the significance and the origin of the designation "Son of Man."² Stanton said it was clear that Christ by this phrase represented himself as the head, the type, the ideal of the race, and since Schleiermacher this had been a popular opinion. Dods, while recognizing an element of truth in this line of interpretation, considered it insufficient because it failed to account for the use of the title in connections where reference was made to predictions regarding the Son of Man. Also, "the conception of an ideal man," he observed, "is philosophical, modern and alien to the Gospels."³

Development of Dods' opinions. Before concluding our consideration of Dods' course on the teaching of Jesus the lecture entitled "Kingdom of God" deserves brief mention because it is the earliest of the remaining lecture manuscripts by Dods. In all probability it was not used more than once at New College,

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1. The terms "Son of Man" and "Christ" are not precisely equivalent; they do not cover the same meanings nor have they the same suggestion, but, as Dods asserted, there is no place in which "the Christ" might not be substituted for "the Son of Man" and yield quite good sense.
 2. While Dods was a professor, new difficulties were introduced into the interpretation of this title "Son of Man." Lietzmann, e.g. in his treatise Der Menschensohn, published in 1896, concluded that Jesus never applied to Himself the title "Son of Man" because such a title does not exist in Aramaic, and on linguistic grounds cannot exist. On the other hand, acceptable authorities like Dalman and Driver were of the opinion that there was nothing in Aramaic usage to prevent Jesus from using a term which should carry the same significance as the Greek designation. Dods felt that although Jesus habitually spoke Aramaic, it was probable that on occasion He spoke Greek and may Himself have used the actual Greek designation which the gospels report.
 3. Dods, Op. cit., p. 13.

due to its limited treatment of the major problems to which Dods later devoted several long lectures. The only books used in preparing this lecture were Ecce Homo by J.R. Seeley¹ and The Jewish and The Christian Messiah by V.H. Stanton which appeared in 1886, just three years prior to Dods' election to the professorship.² Stanton was strongly persuaded that the New Testament could best be understood in the light of Christ's view of the Kingdom of God, and that "it may be said, with but little exaggeration, that descriptions of the characteristics of the Kingdom, expositions of its laws, accounts of the way men were actually receiving it, forecasts of its future, make up the whole central portion of the synoptic narrative."³ As we have already indicated, Dods was in substantial agreement with this, and, following A.B. Bruce's publication of The Kingdom of God in 1889, he also placed the Kingdom of God at the heart of New Testament Theology.

The development of Dods' opinions can be seen when these early lectures are compared with those which he wrote in later years. For example, in this lecture he said, "It is very difficult to ascertain to what extent the nation looked for a Messiah at the time of Christ's coming."⁴ Whereas in a later lecture he revealed

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1. The author was anonymous in 1889.
 2. The source materials for this lecture were so limited and so out of keeping with other lectures that one may believe it was intended to be used only his first year at New College, the year for which he had very little time to prepare his lectures.
 3. H.V. Stanton, The Jewish and Christian Messiah, (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1886) p. 206.
 4. Dods, Lecture MS., "Kingdom of God," p. 3.

his complete change of mind when he wrote assuredly, "It is from the Gospels themselves we can most readily and accurately ascertain the prevalence and the contents of the Messianic hope in the early part of the first century....During this period the Messianic idea was familiar to the Jewish mind and the Messianic expectation intense and ready."¹ Still later He altered his view again and accepted a more moderate position.

There was a universal expectation that the ideal relation of Jehovah and His people would be realized, that God... would reveal Himself as the God and King of His people on earth, while on their side His people would serve Him in righteousness. This intervention of Jehovah was not uniformly associated with the idea of a mediating Messiah, but always with the penitence and hearty allegiance of the people.²

Similarly altered opinions were clearly evident throughout all of Dods' manuscripts. All his lectures bear the plainest traces of careful study and reflection, yet he was always ready to admit that he might be wrong in the conclusion, and he kept his mind continually open to fresh evidence.

1. Dods, Lecture MS., "Apocalyptic Literature," p. 13.

2. Dods, Lecture MS., "Theme of Our Lord's Teaching--The Kingdom," p. 25.

Theology of Paul.

Dods greatly admired and appreciated Paul who seemed to him to be the purest product of the Spirit of Christ that the world had ever known.

He is the individual to whom, next to Christ, the world owes most. He is the one whom we are compelled to understand if we would understand Christianity. It was he who delivered Christianity from Judaism and in doing so taught the world the difference between the bondsman of religion and the free sons of God. It was he who analyzed the work of Christ and His relation to the individual, to the Church, and to the world; while in his own life he illustrated the character begotten by the new faith. It was he who carried into every department of human life the new spirit, and by his sane and reasoned judgments saved the new community from mistakes and scandals.... Subtract the work and personality of Paul from the history of primitive Christianity and it collapses into a shrivelled and unintelligible movement. It was he, and he almost alone and unaided, who severed this new birth from dying Judaism and presented it to the world as the heir of all that was best in the past and supreme over the new life of the future.... In his own time almost ousted from the Apostleship and constantly denied the rank and privileges of an Apostle, he has so entirely eclipsed the work done by the rest that the impression is left upon the mind that the success of Christianity is due almost entirely to him.¹

Dods insisted that in order to estimate the greatness of Paul's work and to understand how it gave birth to a new world one must bear in mind that when Paul incurred the detestation of his countrymen by proclaiming a purely spiritual religion, absolutely free from all rites and rules and laws, the whole world conceived of religion as in the main observance and bondage. When Paul cut himself loose even from the Jewish law, which was of Divine authority, and asserted that in Christ a man was no longer bound by anything external, but by a personal relationship, he took the boldest and most thoroughly

1. Dods, Lecture MS., "Paul I," p. 1.

revolutionary step ever taken by a human soul. Dods also stressed that it was Paul's own initial faith in the law and his absolute dependence on it for salvation that gave him to understand the world-wide difference between the man who is bound at all points by countless minute requirements, and the man who finds his life in the love of a Person and who is led by that love to the only true life for man. His gospel was the gospel of liberty, of divine sonship, of the absolute sufficiency of Christ for salvation. His greatness consisted not in his elaboration of the doctrine of justification by faith, nor in the light he shed on the future, but in his full entrance into the mind of Christ as the bearer and embodiment and mediator of the true spirit of Sonship.

That which gives to the teaching of Paul the validity of external truth is that once for all he lived into the true relation of the soul to Christ and perceived once for all what that relationship involved in conduct and in destiny, the life it led to, the re-incarnation of the spirit of the Christ in the person of the believer. That we have in Paul's teaching the true interpretation of Christ and the normal experience of the soul's relation to Christ is certified by the character formed in him, the life he led,¹ and the influence he brought Christ to exert upon humanity.

What were the influences which affected his theology and its expression? Dods felt that much in the life and teaching of Paul is explained by his being a Roman citizen. His citizenship enabled him to claim certain exemptions and won for him certain privileges. But above all it gave him a pride in the great Empire and a feeling towards it which the ordinary Jew could scarcely have. His consciousness of citizenship gave him more of a home feeling in the places he visited and tended to widen his views.

1. Ibid., p. 6.

Dods believed not only that Paul could speak and write Greek but that he was familiar with the classical writers of Greece. This was argued from the character of his birthplace as a center of education and learning, and from the quotations in his writings.

Paul's theology was colored by certain aspects of Roman law. Adoption, for instance, although unknown among the Jews, was a recognized Roman custom, regulated by law, and this practice was used by Paul to render intelligible the relation of the Christian to God. How far his theory of justification was influenced by Roman judicial forms Dods did not venture to say, but that these had some effect upon Paul's mind and expanded his idea of justice and government was not doubted.

The students were also led to consider the supposition that Paul was familiar with Stoic philosophy. Considering the coincidences in thought and expression which were found between Paul and Seneca, considering also the direct references to the Stoic philosophy in the speech at Athens, and considering that Tarsus was a stronghold of Stoicism, Dods assumed that Paul was to a limited extent influenced by the phraseology of the Stoics, at least in the expression of his ethical ideas if not in his theology.

According to Pfleiderer, the theology of Paul was influenced by the Greek philosophy filtrating through the Book of Wisdom, and also through his acquaintance with Apollos. In tracing the theology of Paul to its sources Pfleiderer concluded that while its organizing principle was his faith in the crucified Christ, its elements were derived on the one hand from the Pharisaic theology and on the other

from the hellenistic theosophy. Dods agreed that the peculiarity of the Pauline theology consists precisely in the close combination of these two elements. Only by allowing its proper place and influence to each of these elements can the theology of Paul be understood. The theology of the second century was neither Pauline nor Jewish-Christian but merely hellenistic; and this was the result of neglecting the Jewish element in Paul's thought. Reformation theology on the contrary, looked exclusively to the Pharisaic side of Pauline thought because there the Reformers found the weapons which best suited their own warfare against the catholic legal Christianity. "Modern theology," Dods surmised, "is returning again to the Hellenistic conception, which...may dogmatically be right but is exegetically wrong. For no understanding of the actual Paul can be thought of until both elements of his mind are grasped, both the Pharisaic and the Hellenistic."¹

In his lectures on the theology of Paul Dods exhibited less independent thought than in any of his other courses. He quoted at length from other writers and the outlines of his lectures were often influenced by leading theological books on early Christianity. Among his many citations there appeared one from his father's book, On the Incarnation of the Eternal Word, which is interesting to note. The Professor, at that time, was considering an expression used by Paul which in both ancient and modern times has given rise to much questioning; namely, the passage in Romans 8:3 where Paul said that God sent his Son "in the likeness of sinful flesh." Two

1. Dods, Lecture MS., "Paul II," p. 3.

questions are involved in the interpretation of this phrase. Does the word "likeness" mean that His flesh was identical with ours, or does it imply that there was a difference? The other question is whether the use of "sinful flesh" implies that all flesh is sinful? After Dods mentioned the views of Baur, Tertullian, the Pelagians, and Augustine, he introduced his father's argument in the following manner:

In recent times this text played a great part in the Irvingite controversy. Irving reversed the argument of the Pelagians and reasoned thus: "There is no difference between our flesh and that of Christ; therefore the flesh of Christ is also sinful." To this position of Irving's it was objected by the orthodox, that if Christ's flesh had really been sinful flesh, it could not have been said to be like it. "Two things completely exclude likeness, either total opposition or entire identity. Had the flesh of Christ been in all respects different from sinful flesh, then it could not with truth have been said to be in the likeness of sinful flesh. And it is equally true, that had it been in all respects the same as sinful flesh, that is, had it been sinful flesh, it could with as little truth have been said to be in the likeness of sinful flesh."¹

After closely examining these words for some years, Dods decided that his father's argument was not a strong one after all. However, rather than delete the quotation, he added this brief evaluation of it:

This reasoning is scarcely put in a sufficiently guarded manner. For that which is a perfect copy or reproduction of an article, although in every respect so like as to be indistinguishable, may be said to be made in the likeness of the model or type.²

Then he went on to say that what Paul meant by this phrase was that Christ appeared in that same nature which in us is sinful, but in Him was not sinful. This was needful in order that

1. Dods, Lecture MS., "Paul XI," p. 8.

2. Ibid.

Jesus might condemn sin in the flesh. In elaborating his point Dods resorted to his strongly held view of Christ's humanity.

In order to be a really representative man and not a mere bogus creation for official purposes, he must be truly human, must enter into a condition in which he could feel the force of temptations which come through the flesh. By living in the flesh he became connected with the external world in a new fashion, and by the dependence of his flesh upon what was material and physical he became open to the appeals of what was material precisely as all men are. In the case of Jesus we cannot speak of hereditary bias towards evil, but the fulness of life we may ascribe to Him and the openness to all influences which touch the heart and quicken the imagination, must have rendered Him exceptionally liable to temptation.¹

Although Dods made frequent use of other books on Paul he was not entirely dependent on them for his understanding of Pauline theology. The many hours of his life which had been devoted to the study of Paul were remarkably fruitful. His approach to the problems involved in First Corinthians 15:44-45 gives evidence of this. In this much-contested passage, Paul is expounding and illustrating the truth of the resurrection of Christ's people, and in particular is endeavoring to persuade the Corinthians that the risen body need not necessarily be the same as the body we now wear. There are, Paul said, several kinds of flesh, variously suited to the life of the creatures that wear them; and there are various kinds of bodies. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body. A natural body is sown in the grave and a spiritual body is raised from the grave. Thus, it is written, "The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening spirit." Dods contended that the time alluded to in the verb "was made" was the time of Christ's resurrection, because it was then His humanity was perfected and He became a life-giving spirit.

1. Ibid., p. 9.

That it cannot refer to His pre-existence with the Father is evident from the words which follow: "that was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural and afterward that which is spiritual." It was as the second Adam, second in order of time, that Christ became a living spirit, because those to whom He gives life are to bear His image, and that, as we are told in verse 49, is the image of the heavenly. It is not the earthly Christ but Christ in His risen and perfected humanity to whose image we are to be conformed.¹

Dods realized that at first sight this interpretation might seem to be inconsistent with the context because when it is said of the first Adam that he was made "a living soul" this of course refers to his first appearance on the earth; therefore it might be supposed that when Paul says the second Adam was made a living spirit, the time referred to is His first appearance on earth. But Dods was persuaded that this inconsistency is more in appearance than in reality.

It was because the second Adam was heavenly that He could pass as He did through all human experience and enter upon the heavenly state by an immediate resurrection. The direct ground of Christ's originating power lies in what was manifested in His resurrection but the resurrection itself was based on something deeper, viz. on his heavenliness. What Paul teaches, then, here is that as Adam when made a living soul could not only himself live but could propagate living men like himself: so Christ by His resurrection became a life-giving spirit and could not only Himself live as a spiritual glorified man but could also produce men like Himself, spiritual and heavenly.²

In other lectures Dods showed how this idea that Christ became at His resurrection a life-giving spirit runs deeply through Paul's theology. Paul, he said, was conscious that Christ had power to transform him and was actually transforming him into His own likeness. It was this consciousness which nourished in Paul the

1. Dods, Lecture MS., "Paul VII," p. 11.

2. Ibid., p. 12.

extraordinary enthusiasm of hope which seems to break out here and there in his writings and which animates and shines through the passage which is generally supposed to be the most eloquent and soaring in his epistles-- the eighth chapter of Romans.

The key to Paul, Dods believed,

is his conception of sonship to which the spirit of Christ raises. The son is free, does not require to make good his claim to favour or provision, needs no external compulsion, but lives from within, from the spirit; it is this spirit of sonship which is man's true "inheritance," the "promise" for which he waited, and for which he learned to long during all the preceding years. But what amazed and overjoyed him day by day was this sense of sonship -- of the overflowing and fatherly love of God.¹

The lectures on Paul were re-written several times during the nineteen years Dods taught at New College. In his revision in 1893 (his fifth year of teaching) he referred to the following authors: Farrar, Conybeare, Henson, Stalker, Iverach, Renan, B/ Keyschlag, Beet, McGiffert, Pfleiderer, Sabatier, Hausrath, Freeman Clarke, Arnold, Stevens (of Yale), Bruce, Holston, Wendt, Leidemann, Ernesti, Gunkel, Glovel, Schmidt, Muller, and Jowett. Many additional authors were consulted for his revisions of 1904 and 1907. Among them were Holtzmann, Ramsay, Gilbert, Speir, Weinel, Wrede, Bacon, Everett, Kabisch, Knowlings, and Sommerville.

1. Dods, Later Letters, pp. 210-11. In a letter to Henry Sloane Coffin Dods wrote: "I think the most valuable thing Paul gave us was his idea of the freedom of the sons of God. You can feel how his soul danced and exulted in that-- "All things are yours." "Ibid., p.94.

For his students he provided a recommended reading list with comments about the books. For example, he said, "For a brief survey and introduction to the study of Paul nothing could be better than Dr. Stalker's book." "Sabatier's The Apostle Paul is a book every student of Paul should have. He makes it his aim to trace the development of Paul's thought and much light is shed on the Epistles." Knowing that sermon preparation was the main use to which his students would put their knowledge he said, "Parrar's Life of Paul is excellent and brings before the reader all the difficulties and satisfactorily discusses them. It has rather thrown into the shade Conybeare and Howson which is still useful however for following in Paul's track-- though the description should not, I think, be too freely used in sermons. Lewin's large volumes are even better and are abundantly furnished with plans and maps." Dods' fair and sympathetic evaluation of the works of men whose views differed from his own can be seen in his comment on Baur. "Baur, although somewhat superseded, must still be used. There is much that provokes but you can forgive him for the sake of the splendid suggestions which from time to time appear."¹

1. Dods, Lecture MS., "Paul," p. iii.

It is interesting to note that after teaching the theology of Paul for many years, Dods was never completely satisfied with his lectures. He felt that they lacked the vitality of his other courses,¹ and he was disappointed that he could not comprehend Paul's writings as well as he could the writings of the Apostle John. To his friend Henry Sloane Coffin he wrote on the 7th April, 1902, "I was much ashamed of the Lectures on Paul I gave at Chicago, and have been re-writing some of them. But I find it very hard to get to his standpoint and see with his eyes."² Yet he never ceased trying to improve his understanding of the great apostle and even during his last illness he was attempting to revise his lectures on Paul.

II. HIS EFFECTIVENESS AS A TEACHER

Distinguishing Features of His Lectures.

The teaching ministry of Marcus Dods is best seen in his lecture manuscripts. They, more clearly than any of his other writings, reflect the characteristics which made him an outstanding teacher. It was only natural that his New College classroom was the place where his didactic skill found its greatest expression, for as a professor all of his energies could be devoted to the work which he loved. Certainly his lectures reveal the fact that they were written by one

1. Dods, Later Letters, p.83

2. Ibid., p.71

who enjoyed his work, and his later letters frequently mention how much pleasure he received from teaching.¹

Thoroughness. One of the most striking features of the manuscripts is the thoroughness with which they were prepared. Dods' wide reading enabled him to draw his information from many sources. He had a wonderful power of assimilating what he read, and of setting forth in clear and telling language the results of his reflections and studies. When writing on any subject pertaining to his field he could incorporate not only the most recent theories but with equal ease he could mention the significant contributions of the early Church Fathers or the Reformers or contemporary expositors. Among the sixty

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1. "Happily I enjoy my own work, and have good times with the students." Later Letters, p. 212. To the Rev. Prof. H.R. Mackintosh, he wrote, "I would rather not have the Principalship, much rather not, and I greatly like teaching, and to give up the one and keep the other is a real grief to me, and strong evidence of your great powers of persuasion...However, let me be thankful that I have held it, (the chair) so long and have had so many opportunities of instilling truth into eager minds. Certainly I have had the satisfaction of seeing our College improve to an amazing extent." Ibid., pp.281-2. See also letter to Alexander Whyte, p.282; letter to Mackintosh, p.289, and letter to Miss (B), p.95.

scholars whom he consulted in writing his lectures on the Epistle to the Galatians were the following--Greek commentators: Chrysostom, Theodore of Mopsuetia^S, Theodoret, and Theophylact; Latin Fathers: Jerome and Augustine; Reformers: Luther, Calvin, Beza; Post-Reformation scholars: Estius, Bengel, Wetstein; nineteenth century scholars; over twenty-five writers including four Roman Catholics. References in his lectures were not limited to religious writers. They included statements by contemporary scientists, journalists, poets, novelists, and others. The way in which he could use appropriately scientific material to elucidate a point was illustrated in previous citations from his lectures on "Hebrews."

Perhaps the clearest evidence of the thoroughness of his lectures was the fact that without revision sections from the lectures were often printed in book form. Some material necessarily had to be re-written for the purpose of publication, but many of his lectures were so carefully kept up to date that when the opportunity came for publishing them no revision was necessary.

The careful and thorough scholarship which formed the basis of all his New College lectures enabled him to speak to his students with that calm assurance which comes only to those who are aware that they have mastered their subject. Such assurance as Dods exhibited in his exegetical courses must have immediately won the confidence of his students.

Clear and interesting presentation. Dods was extremely adept at presenting the results of his scholarship in a lucid, interesting manner. The lectures disclose the fact that he was ceaseless in his efforts to outline the material of a course in

the most logical order. Especially the manuscripts for the courses on "Galatians," "Teaching of Jesus," and "Paul" show how he rearranged the order of his material many times in an effort to attain the best method of presentation. Though he usually grouped his material topically, he also treated some problems from the historical point of view. His lectures on "The Canon" illustrate the frequent use he made of rhetorical questions to arouse the interest of his class. Examples of the way in which he tried to anticipate questions that might be in the minds of his students are seen in sections cited from "Teaching of Jesus," "Hebrews," and "The Canon." But perhaps that which served to enliven the lectures more than anything else was his own interest in that which he was teaching. As one reads the lectures one is impressed with the fact that their author was a man who did not stand back in detachment from the issues he discussed, but was vitally alive to every point under discussion. Vitality is also apparent in the way Dods stated his own opinion and gave his students words of advice and warning. His own position is particularly evident in his lectures on "The History of Criticism." One is made aware of his approval of Chrysostom's method of interpretation, his enthusiasm for the methods of German scholarship, his disappointment in Pfleiderer's Gifford Lectures. On the whole it could be said of his lectures that they contained no insincere or superficial statements. His students became aware that his conclusions had been reached not at second-hand, or without regard to difficulties, but that his convictions had passed through the crucible of his own experience.

One final point which is interesting to note in connection

with Dods' presentation is that certain sections of his lectures were written in such an homiletical style that on occasions he actually used them for sermons when asked to preach before an Edinburgh congregation. The close relation between his lectures and sermonic material also becomes apparent in a comparison of both his manuscript sermons and his manuscript lectures. It is possible to conclude that sections of several courses were taken from sermons which he preached in Renfield Free Church. This is especially true of material contained in the courses on "John," "Hebrews," and "Teaching of Jesus."

Emphasis on background information. In his teaching Dods exemplified that which he emphasized to his students, and nothing received greater or more frequent emphasis than the necessity of knowing linguistic and historical background. For example:

In order to understand the New Testament or any other book we must put ourselves as far as possible alongside the writer, and as far as possible interpret his words with the aid of his mental habits and conceptions of the world. It is not always easy even to put the right meaning on his words and express it in our own language. We fit an English supposed equivalent to a Greek word and think our task accomplished but a language which has grown in circumstances so different and from roots so alien cannot be expected always to furnish a word which will precisely fit the Greek expression and cover all it means and nothing more or less. But a far greater difficulty lies beyond: the difficulty of putting ourselves in an ancient writer's place, of getting inside his mind, of adapting ourselves to his mental contents and associations, and so of understanding why he expresses himself in terms so different from those which we should naturally employ. To bring our mind thus into real touch with the writers of the New Testament it is essential that we understand the circle of ideas which formed their atmosphere, and moulded their thought. In recent times, accordingly, students of the New Testament have become alive to the importance of considering it in connection

with the literature of its time.¹

It was his opinion that if a man wanted to become a competent exegete of the New Testament, he must first familiarize himself with the conditions under which the books of the New Testament were written and also acquaint himself with the background material relevant to the study and interpretation of the New Testament.

His exegetical courses illustrate his own knowledge of the Apocrypha, pseudepigrapha, hellenism, the Roman Empire, the social and religious conditions of Palestine in the time of Christ, the patristic writings, the science of language, the nature of the Bible, the formation of the canon, and the history of criticism. After he had been a professor for a few years he began to write separate lectures on all of these subjects so that the students could be familiar with the significant aspects of each.

Openness to new evidence. In reading Dods' lectures one is aware that he never forced his interpretations or pressed his own conclusions upon his students. Rather he attempted to stir their minds to enquiry and encouraged them to think through problems for themselves. In his attempt to guide his students in formulating their own answers he especially commended to them the necessity for open-mindedness. He encouraged this attitude not only by explicit advice but primarily by his own example. Although Dods' lectures bear the plainest traces of careful study and reflection, he was always ready to admit that he might be wrong in the conclusion, and he kept his mind continually open to fresh evidence.

1. Dods, Lecture MS., "Background of the New Testament, the Apocrypha I," p. 1.

His numerous revisions of the lectures display the fact that he was always a student himself, always learning, always open to new light. In the courses on "Galatians," "Teaching of Jesus," and "Paul," we have observed how he altered his opinions on various points, even some which he had previously expressed in print. The manuscript changes enable us to see more clearly that he did not use his great mental powers for original and creative purposes so much as for the evaluation of the writings of others. His revisions coincided with the publication of the most significant books in the field of New Testament Theology. However, it was to his credit that he faithfully kept abreast of the times, and even though his lectures sometimes lacked originality or individuality, his students were assured of receiving a clear summary of the latest contributions to New Testament studies. It is important to note also that Dods was exceptionally fair in presenting the opinions of those with whom he differed. On the whole his literary taste was most catholic; he laid stress upon the excellence of workmanship and intention. He could recommend a book on the basis of its insight on individual problems although many of his opinions differed from those of the author.

Conclusion. It is only to be expected that in certain details and critical conclusions Dods' lectures are now dated, for he could not fully anticipate the direction which New Testament studies would take in the twentieth century. In lecturing on the parables, for instance, he could not foresee the discoveries and concepts of Form Criticism. He never raised the question, as has C.H. Dodd, whether the setting in which we have a parable in the

Gospels is its original setting in history.¹ One finds in Dods' manuscripts no reference to the fact that "in the period of the oral tradition the parables circulated singly or in pairs and were used by the church for preaching and teaching purposes."² He apparently did not suspect that in some cases the application of a parable was not a part of the earlier tradition, but was supplied by the evangelist, representing the current exegesis in that part of the Church to which he belonged. In like manner, his lectures on the "Kingdom of God," though containing views in advance of some in his day, would now need much revision because of their failure to include the concept of "realized eschatology."

But his twenty-five years' experience as a preacher and his careful examination of the history of criticism gave him such an understanding of the exegete's task that the principles of interpretation which he stressed are generally accepted today. In the light of the guiding principles of the interpretation of the Bible, as adopted in 1949 by the Ecumenical Study Conference at Wadham College, Oxford, Dods could be considered modern in his methods. The section "a" of "the interpretation of a specific passage" sounds as if it might have been written by Dods.

(a) It is agreed that one must start with an historical and critical examination of the passage. This includes:

- 1 The determination of the text;
- 2 The literary form of the passage;
- 3 The historical situation, the Sitz im Leben;
- 4 The meaning which the words had for the original author and hearer or reader;
- 5 The understanding of the passage in the light of its

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1. C.H. Dodd, The Parables of the Kingdom (London: The Religious Book Club, 1942), pp. 26ff.
 2. A.M. Hunter, "The Interpreter and the Parables," Interpretation, 14:84, January, 1960.

total context and the background out of which it emerged.¹

These principles were carried out in Dods' own exegetical courses and he continually urged his students to follow them in their own endeavour to interpret the Bible correctly. Thus, it is evident that even though much of the content of his lectures has been superseded by modern scholars, his teaching methods, especially his methods of interpretation, are still valid today.

His Influence As a Professor.

In 1889 when Marcus Dods was being considered for the vacant chair of New Testament Exegesis in New College, one of the points mentioned in favor of his candidature was that in addition to his being intellectually gifted and equipped, he was a man who had a "singular charm for young men."² Quite naturally this was regarded as a matter of high importance in a teacher. On what basis could men say that Dods' previous experience with young men had providentially prepared him for the Professor's Chair? In answering this question it is helpful to focus attention on an aspect of Dods' Glasgow ministry which has not been previously examined.

In Glasgow Dods gathered about himself a curiously mixed company of young men, many of whom were far from sharing his views. These young men were first attracted to him because of his preaching. It was an accepted fact that on Sunday mornings more arts and divinity students could be found in Renfield Church than in any

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1. Alan Richardson and Wolfgang Schweitzer (editors), Biblical Authority For Today, (London: SCM Press Ltd., 1951), pp. 241-2.
 2. Proceedings and Debates, 1889, p. 77.

other place of worship in Glasgow. As a sane Christian apologist, a candid Bible teacher, and a satisfying preacher, Dods greatly appealed to young working men and university students.

Probably at the request of these young men Dods started a Sunday midday class in the hall beneath the church. There he lectured on various subjects. In 1877 he discussed the theme "Mohammed, Buddha, and Christ" and later in the year he delivered these lectures to the English Presbyterian College, London.¹ But it was not in the class so much as in other ways that his influence was felt. Several of these students in later years commented that no man was so accessible to the young men of their generation as Dods. His house was always open on Sunday evenings to the young men, and then he was free to talk and listen, frankly as a friend and comrade.

His very presence was reassuring. The square, straight, manly face, so candid, winsome, robust; the convincing voice which had such a tone of finality in it; the accent of devotion that betokened a soul which was very sure of God; the humour which could not conceal itself behind a grave demeanour; the kindness and simplicity of a great heart; made Dr. Dods a friend to be relied on to the uttermost.²

The young men he gathered round him caught his spirit and were bound together by its subtle strength. In 1909 one who had been a part of this group said: "To this day when one who was a member of that disciple company meets another, there is the quick response of men who belonged to one brotherhood, and the glad recognition of

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1. These lectures were published by Hodder and Stoughton in 1877 under the same title.
 2. Article by Rev. David Purves, D.D., Belfast Northern Whig, April 28, 1909.

the work and charm of Marcus Dods."¹

In his personal contacts and counseling Dods was effective as a spiritual guide of young men primarily because of his sympathetic understanding and his obvious sincerity of faith. Through his own intense experiences during his probationary period, he had acquired the rare faculty of speaking to young men as a young man, of entering into their feelings and experiences, their doubts and difficulties, and leading them to realize the manliness of true religion and the attractiveness of Jesus Christ. His obvious sincerity of nature gave him great power over those whom the Church seldom touched. They were impressed by the fact that a man so wise, candid, and devout believed with all his heart in the common faith. This in itself drew many to the faith of Jesus Christ. In a speech at Dods' Semi-Jubilee in Renfield Free Church Henry Drummond said:

I have seen him surrounded by groups of the most brilliant young thinkers and sceptical scholars in the University; I have watched them baiting him with every conceivable anti-Christian argument, cross-examining him in every possible direction, challenging his Christianity in every disputed point, and have seen him stand like a rock before them all.²

When the charges were brought against Dods' teaching in 1877-1878, his young men suffered with him. They could not understand why any should question his loyalty. To them it seemed that there was no one in Scotland who was doing more to defend the faith, to

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1. W.M. Clow preaching in Stevenson Memorial Church, May 2, 1909. Reported in the Glasgow Herald, May 3, 1909 and the Scotsman, May 3, 1909.
 2. The British Monthly, 4:192, March, 1904.

enlarge the knowledge of Christ and to make His love and cross the central objects of believing hearts.¹

The initiative which Dods took in helping younger men and the effect of his personal interest in them are both indicated in the following statement from Henry Drummond:

I came to Glasgow a waif and a stray...One day he asked me to dinner--the first time I had ever been asked to dinner in Glasgow...he asked me to go for a walk the following Saturday...I felt that I was set up for life when I had been seen on the Great Western road with Dr. Dods...Now I can claim him...as the greatest influence in many directions that has come across my life.²

For several years Dods continued to invite Drummond to accompany him on his Saturday afternoon walks and it was he who encouraged Drummond to publish Natural Law in the Spiritual World and thereby started him on his brief literary career.

Thus, when Dods' name came before the Assembly of 1889 his conspicuous success with young men in Glasgow was a definite factor contributing to his election to the Chair of New Testament Exegesis. Many who voted for him believed that he would influence the New College students as he had the young men in Glasgow, and events proved that they were right.

The first noticeable effect Dods' presence had on the College was manifested in the students' attitude toward their studies. It has already been noted that his lectures bore evidence of his own habits of hard and methodical work. Primarily then, by his own example Dods instilled in his students a respect for scholarship and industry. Of slackness he was always positively intolerant,

1. Scotsman, May 3, 1909; Glasgow Herald, April 27 and May 3, 1909.

2. British Weekly, March 18, 1897.

and when slackness appeared with obscurantism, his impatience led him to occasional outbursts, in striking contrast with his usually genial and placid good nature. "If you do not work hard," he would say to his students, "you are out of sympathy with the whole working world."¹ Such insistence on the virtue of work within a theological college, can only be counted to his credit. P. Carnegie Simpson, who was in his second year at New College in 1889, has left us a first-hand account of Dods' influence on academic life in New College.

I have no hesitation in saying that the chief effect his coming had was upon the men's work. In those days it was something of the fashion at New College to study on other lines than our lessons. The students were not lazy. On the contrary, there was exceptional keenness, both intellectual and practical, but it took other forms...than unflinching attendance at lectures and anxious preparation for examinations...An exception must be made in the case of Hebrew, which not the most ingenious student could construe to A.B. Davidson's satisfaction out of his inner consciousness;...But as to other subjects more akin to the natural intelligence, men were apt to exegete the New Testament from the data of their religious experience, to inscribe on the front page of a rather scantily filled notebook of theology the comforting motto pectus theologum facit, and to have of the facts of Church history that "general knowledge" which disguises particular ignorance. Dr. Dods, by his serious personal industry, his grave displeasure...with all shallowness and slackness, and his thorough and methodical manner of teaching, effected a great change in the college view of class work.²

To appreciate fully the impact Dods' presence had on student life at New College, it is helpful to consider for a moment the relationship between students and professors in the years before Dods arrived. In earlier years the students were not encouraged to examine and question theological dogmas, and the gulf between

1. Glasgow Herald, April 27, 1909.

2. The British Monthly, 4:189, March, 1904.

professors and students was such that often there was no one to whom a doubting, perplexed student could go for mature counsel and open discussion.¹ The writer of Veitch's memoir went so far as to indicate that the attempts of some professors to extinguish the spirit of enquiry was responsible for the loss of several fine students from the ministry of the Free Church.² During the four years in which the Robertson Smith Case was before the Assembly the wide divergence in opinion became more apparent. Student sympathies were almost wholeheartedly with Smith.³ During the year 1876 when the College Committee first took up the matter of Smith's article "Bible," Professor Smeaton, Dods' predecessor in the Chair of New Testament Exegesis, earnestly contended that the views expressed in the article called for judicial action. Such an attitude found little support among the students. Although the student-professor relationship had improved by 1889, still many students facing intellectual and spiritual perplexities were left unsatisfied by their professors. John Kelman, who was later associated with Alexander Whyte in St. George's Free Church, was one of the New College students during Dods' first session there. He once from the pulpit recalled his impressions of those days.

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1. When the vacancy occurred on the New College staff in 1889 one commissioner to the Assembly of that year said he would object to any one occupying the Chair of New Testament Exegesis whose critical position was different from that of Dods. It had been his own fortune in his student days, said the commissioner, to pass through a painful experience of doubt, owing to the manner in which the dogma of absolute verbal infallibility had been pressed. Proceedings and Debates, 1889, p. 80.
 2. Mary R.L. Bryce, John Veitch: A Memoir (Edinburgh: William Blackwood and Sons, 1896), pp. 97ff.
 3. One notes in reading the debates and proceedings of the various sittings of the Assembly that the student galleries loudly cheered Smith's speeches and those of his supporters. In the Assemblies of 1880 and 1881 the students became openly critical of Principal's Rainy's policy.

The students, he said, were speculating widely; they were wondering; some of them were doubting. The drift of new thoughts seemed to sweep over their faith.¹ It was also evident from several of the nominating speeches in the 1889 Assembly that some of the older generation recognized that there were elements of restlessness and doubt in student opinion and that it was vitally important to place in the New Testament Chair a man who could "enable his students to distinguish between the rock and the sand."²

When Dods came to New College the students at once knew "that a barricade man had come, one who stood between them and the drift. From the first the New College gave itself over to him with an extreme implicitness of trust."³ Dods dealt with the doubts and difficulties of his students with the same sure methods which had been so effective with the young men in Glasgow. In the classroom, as in his Renfield pulpit, he steadied and impressed young men by his massive convictions. As men became aware of his utter honesty and his comprehensive power of intellect they felt that if he could believe they might hope to believe also. "In this connection it would be difficult to over-estimate the value of the influence of his teaching on the young men of his day," wrote one of his former students in 1909. "There are not a few men in Scotland and in other countries who have to thank God today for that influence through which they were brought out of the darkness of doubt to faith and hope."⁴ It is also interesting

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1. John Kelman in a sermon preached in St. George's United Free Church, May 2, 1909, and reported in the Scotsman and the Glasgow Herald, May 3, 1909.
 2. Proceedings and Debates, 1889, pp. 81, 83.
 3. Kelman, Scotsman and Glasgow Herald, May 3, 1909.
 4. Mr. Thomas Ogilvie writing for the East United Free Church Magazine, of May 2, 1909.

to note that whenever Dods preached, the students went in great numbers to hear him. "Dods was the students' preacher. Men followed him everywhere. We went because he fed our souls," wrote the correspondent for the Presbyterian Messenger who had himself studied under Dods at New College.¹

Dods also encouraged the students to come to him for private discussions. It was a constant wonder to his students that he seemed to have so much time to spare for them. Men were always consulting him in all kinds of difficulties--spiritual, critical, practical. Hugh R. Mackintosh, later a colleague of Dods in New College, observed that

students have a quick eye for men who really know; and from the first day of his coming to New College Dr. Dods had their confidence. They took their difficulties into the well-known retiring room, sure of being understood, and not less sure of being encouraged to think things bravely out to the end for themselves.²

He had the true pedagogue's gift of drawing out the best from those who studied under him. One of his former students recalled, "Never was any man so appreciative of others, and when you talked with him you began to think you really knew something after all. He drew your best from you, and a generation of men feel that he made them respect themselves."³

Dods took an interest in the practical side of the students' work, particularly in connection with the New College Settlement.

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1. Article signed "old Student" in the Presbyterian Messenger, June, 1909.
 2. British Weekly, April 29, 1909. "Although Dods took a personal interest in his students and became a friend to many of them, some students remained aloof because of their feeling of awe in his presence." (The late Dr. A. Herbert Gray in a personal interview, July 23, 1955.
 3. Belfast Northern Whig, April 28, 1909.

P. Carnegie Simpson has written that no professor did more personally to encourage this practical aspect of the students' work. One student recalled that although he had heard Dods on many occasions, his most vivid recollection of him was his visit among a group of poor children at the Edinburgh Pleasance Mission. The New College students were in charge of this settlement, which was established in aid of poor dwellers of that area. Dods appeared to enjoy opportunities of speaking to the children there and seemed to be "much at home" among them.¹

Dods was always concerned that divinity students should have opportunities to preach before completing their course at New College. In 1903 when a movement was initiated for reform of New College, he wrote:

I fear the only thing our Reformers will be able to suggest is the lengthening of our Session. I rather think the six months' freedom from professors and text books is the most valuable part of the curriculum. It lets the men grow, gives them time to pursue their own lines of work, and affords opportunities for preaching.²

When his former students entered their probationary period he kept in touch with many of them and whenever he heard a probationer's sermon, he always found some point to praise. After his young men were settled in a pastorate, he would preach for them on an anniversary or a Communion Sunday. Dr. W.M. Macgregor, who preached Dods' funeral sermon said, "There must be scores of men in different churches who to-day are realising how large a part he was of them, and how his great and dear spirit is governing all their ministry."³

1. Morning Leader, May 1, 1909; The British Monthly 4:189, March, 1904.

2. Dods, Later Letters, p. 93.

3. W.M. Macgregor, sermon preached in St. Andrew's United Free Church, reported in Scotsman, May 3, Glasgow Herald, May 3, 1909.

Dods had not been at New College many years before his reputation as a teacher of New Testament began to attract to his classroom students from all parts of the world.¹ His eye was quick to discern that not all came with the same seriousness of purpose. Humorously he wrote in 1895, "The Yanks are having a high 'stars and stripes' time. We are having a lot of them, together with all the Parthians, Medes and Elamites, to dinner tomorrow. There are too many of them at College this year; I wonder if they learn anything."² One young American, however, made a strong impression on Dods. A friendship developed between them which deepened through the years. Some of Dods' most self-revealing letters were written to Henry Sloane Coffin, the young American who came to New College to study under him for two years. In the spring of 1901 when Dods went to New York City to lecture at Union Theological Seminary, he was a guest in Coffin's home. To his sister Marcia he wrote that "Coffin is one of the most charming of human beings and one of the best."³ In the summer of 1902 Coffin visited Dods in Edinburgh. Again in 1904 Dods visited Coffin in New York and Coffin returned to Edinburgh to stay with Dods the following summer. Dods once said to Coffin, "I believe you personally will have a great, and I hope quiet, part in the great advance of thought and of religion in America."⁴ In later years this man who became President of Union Theological

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1. Extract from the Minute of the Senatus of New College, extracted by Alexander Martin, Secretary of Senatus, 28th June, 1909.
 2. Dods, Later Letters, p. 7.
 3. Ibid., p. 46. At the time Coffin was minister of the Madison Avenue Presbyterian Church, and Associate Professor of Homiletics at Union Theological Seminary, New York.
 4. Ibid., p. 94.

Seminary in New York and who was invited back to Scotland to deliver one of the principal addresses at the great Union Assembly in 1929 acknowledged that Marcus Dods had been one of the most important influences in his life and thought.¹

1. This point was discussed with Principal John Baillie who for a period of time was associated with Henry Sloane Coffin on the staff of Union Theological Seminary.

CHAPTER SIX

AN EVALUATION OF THE LIFE AND WORK OF MARCUS DODS

In evaluating the life and work of Marcus Dods, certain questions naturally occur. Could he be considered a great churchman or theologian? Was he primarily a controversialist? Have his books been of lasting value? Can a unifying principle be detected in his life and work? Was his ministry effective? First let us determine what was the pre-eminent aspect of Dods' career and secondly, let us indicate the nature of his contribution to the nineteenth century Church in Scotland.

I. HIS PRIMARY ROLE

Ecclesiastical Leader?

Dods definitely was not an ecclesiastical leader. As a young man he developed an aversion to church courts which he never outgrew. During his probation years he summarized his feelings when he said, "I am heartily glad I am away from the Assembly. How abhorrent it is to my soul."¹ Earlier he had prophesied, "I'll never be a churchman, it would kill me."² Even in 1901 when he was notified that he had been selected as the sole nominee for the moderatorship of the General Assembly

1. Dods, Early Letters, p. 365.

2. Ibid., p. 172.

of the United Free Church of Scotland, he would not consent to take an active part in the church's highest court, and immediately withdrew his name. His refusal of the moderatorship was a keen disappointment, not only to his friends, but to the Church at large.

His dislike for church courts applied to Presbytery and Synod as well. Dods' son-in-law and daughter, the late Dr. and Mrs. A. Herbert Gray, recalled that he missed the meetings of Presbytery as often as possible.¹ P. Carnegie Simpson agreed that "Dods was never an ecclesiastic, and hardly ever spoke in church courts."² Dods was unostentatious in his own Christian life, and he preferred the church to do its work in an unostentatious manner. He was not impressed by the church's attempt to influence the world by means of its organizational power. In fact, he felt that as the church became more institutionalized, it tended to lose its vitality and effectiveness. "For my part," he said, "I think the church as a vast institution is too conspicuous already, and that ...she would in many respects be in a healthier condition if she were less conspicuous."³ He undoubtedly carried his point to extremes and his refusal to lend his support to the work of the church courts was a blemish on his illustrious ministry.

Theologian?

Dods was not a theologian in the strict sense of the word. He never methodically formulated his religious beliefs and teaching

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1. Related in a personal interview with the writer in London, 23 July, 1955.
 2. The British Monthly, 4:188, March, 1904.
 3. Dods, Later Letters, p. 125.

into a compact, coherent system. Among his many literary productions we look in vain for a single theological work. It appears that the weakest sections of his New College courses were those dealing with Pauline theology.

In some ways it is to be regretted that Dods was not more interested in producing works of purely theological import. His lectures, on the whole, reflect a singularly judicial and interpretative mind and his expository books reveal a penetrating psychological insight. He was thoroughly acquainted with the history of doctrine and had an amazing grasp of current theological and philosophical trends. Fellow ministers and professors acknowledged that it was seldom they met a man whose critical and analytical powers were so keen, or whose ardor for knowledge was so inexhaustible, with the freedom from bias and poise in judgment which marked his well-balanced mind. Thus it seems that he was ideally suited in many respects to be a great theologian.

Yet in only one area of Christian doctrine did he ever attempt to correlate beliefs and work out a systematic presentation and even this lacked comprehensiveness. His book, The Bible: Its Nature and Origin dealt with various aspects of the doctrine of Scripture but his treatment was more historical than theological. It must be recalled too that parts of this book were simply sections lifted in toto from his New College lectures.

Though Dods sometimes minimized the work of the ecclesiastics, he never showed anything but the highest admiration for theologians and their efforts and he had a sincere appreciation for his own Calvinistic background. "Those of us who have been inoculated

with Calvinism," he once said, "are not likely to take much injury from contact with modern thought." He continued:

That which was early in possession within us gives a different colour to what is now advanced; what is new can never equal in importance what has always lain as the foundation of our faith, and we can keep the proportion of things, not taking a mere modification of an old doctrine for proof of its falsity, nor unhesitatingly giving our assent to what appeals to the imagination but has not approved itself to the reason, nor thinking that what is new can form the whole or even the main part of our Christianity.¹

It is one of the curious aspects of Dods' career that he, though not a theologian, was nevertheless a powerful influence upon the theological thought and temper of his Church and country. This point we shall discuss in detail when we consider the nature of his contribution.

Controversialist?

If Dods was neither ecclesiastic nor theologian, how did he become involved in controversy? He was not a man of aggressive temperament and he never took part in the debates of church courts when he could avoid it. Unlike William Robertson Smith who often appeared at his best when engaged in a fiery debate and who, between the years 1877 and 1881, constantly exercised his dialectical skill at the bars of the various church courts, Dods seldom publicly vindicated himself or his writings, and only occasionally resorted to written defenses of his position. During the heated debates of 1877-1878 he never spoke at the meetings of Presbytery, Synod, or General Assembly. His work on behalf of the Robertson Smith cause

1. Dods, Recent Progress in Theology, pp. 12-13.

was done quietly in the background and only once did he speak in the General Assembly in connection with this case. Even on the momentous occasion of the 1889 General Assembly when men were eagerly awaiting news of the professorial election in which inspiration was a main issue, Dods himself was away wandering in the Alps. Again when his case came before the 1890 Assembly, Dods was not present. How then did this man of retiring nature, who was neither churchman nor theologian, ever become involved in controversy to such an extent that the secular press could record at his death, "For a considerable period Dods was a foremost figure in the stormy ecclesiastical life of Scotland."¹

It is impossible to answer this question apart from an examination of the historical setting in which Dods worked, for we must have in mind those factors in the historical situation which had a direct bearing on religious controversy in the Free Church.

In the Assembly of 1878 it was declared that the views Dods expressed regarding inspiration were absolutely without precedent in the annals of the Free Church. Traditional views as to the history, the authorship and the verbal inerrancy of the Bible had remained practically unchallenged in the Scottish Church since the Reformation. But in the year 1878 the General Assembly of the Free Church, which prided itself on being a strict evangelical and orthodox body, was called upon to deal with two of her ministers who appeared to be setting forth revolutionary

1. Liverpool Courier, April 27, 1909. Also Aberdeen Free Press, April 27, 1909; Inverness Leader, April 29, 1909.

conceptions of the Bible. William Robertson Smith, a professor, had challenged the orthodox view of the history and authorship of much of the Old Testament, while Marcus Dods, a preacher, had similarly upset the orthodox concept of literal infallibility. It was not unnatural that the critical views expressed by these two men would create a disturbance within the Church, which as a whole was totally unprepared for such advanced views.

This was the period in which many people in Scotland were being brought for the first time into contact with higher criticism and there was much misunderstanding and uneasiness in regard to it. Criticism was often looked upon as an attempt to undermine the authority of the Bible. Even many educated people judged higher criticism by its worst rather than its best results. Thus, one of Robertson Smith's former professors, who was thoroughly acquainted with Continental scholarship, spoke of the theories of the higher critics as "castle building in the sky."

The situation was further complicated by the way in which critical views were commonly associated with German Rationalism. Many people found it difficult to understand how a man could accept some of the conclusions of higher criticism and at the same time maintain an evangelical faith. When Dods' sermon on "Revelation and Inspiration" was being considered by Glasgow Presbytery in 1877-78, he was accused of having plagiarized his ideas from Germany and of having offered the public worthless German counterfeits. Men urged the Presbytery to "cut up root and branch the Rationalism coming into the church." During the 1890 controversy some maintained that the teaching of Dods and Bruce was directly related to the increased migration of German

Rationalism to the shores of Scotland. Grim pictures were painted of the effects of rationalism in Germany and Holland. It was declared that critical opinions in Germany were at first held only by professors and ministers but eventually the contagion spread throughout the whole population and the churches were emptied. By means of pamphlets and speeches the Scottish public was warned that this would happen in Scotland if the church courts failed to deal firmly with ministers who advocated a critical approach to Scripture.

Fear of any attack on the Bible was intense. "If error is to be admitted in Scripture, where is it to end?" This question was frequently voiced in the courts of the Free Church during this period.

A small aperture in one of the sea banks of Holland considered by itself, may be a very trifling matter; so trifling and insignificant that when first observed it may be regarded as in no appreciable degree fitted to damage the stability of the bank or to interfere with its trustworthiness. Let it alone, however, for a little, and soon the ancient bulwark will be swept away, and fertile fields and plains become one wide waste of waters. So it will be here. Make even a "trifling" breach in the infallible truth and divine authority of the Word of God, and soon, as in Germany, the enemy--rationalism and infidelity--will come in like a flood and sweep everything like evangelical and saving truth before them.¹

With minor variations this analogy recurred again and again in the debates. The extremists insisted that error of any kind was incompatible with the Divinity of Christ and with the character of Scripture as the Word of God. They believed with conviction that the Church which would witness for the Truth must hold every

1. Proceedings and Debates, 1878, p. 230.

word of Scripture as true. Furthermore, they assumed that their view of verbal inerrancy was the only one in harmony with the Confession of Faith.

It was into this setting that Marcus Dods came, not as a theologian, churchman, or controversialist, but as a man who possessed didactic skill in communicating to the public new ideas. Dods was a teacher by nature. Since the days of his youth his innate ability and desire to teach had been apparent. The ascertainment of new truth was to him the occasion for communicating his new ideas to others, either by the spoken or written word. It was this didactic tendency which led him into controversy. His own words tersely summarize the situation; "A teacher who compels the public to look at unfamiliar truths is sure to be branded as a teacher of error, because it is not at first apparent how the unfamiliar coincides with and confirms familiar truth."¹ This is exactly what happened in the case of his teaching on Inspiration. When he made his decision to publish his sermon on "Revelation and Inspiration," the nature of the times, and the nature of his message meant that conflict was inevitable.

Yet it must be recognized that the resulting controversy would have been less prolonged and heated had he been willing to present his ideas in different terms. But the arts of diplomacy were unknown to him. He uttered his views with a frank bluntness that often startled even his friends. He was accused more than

1. The Expositor, 9:71, 1894.

once of publicly uttering views which were hasty and rash. On two different occasions the General Assembly admonished him to avoid forms of expression which might have a tendency to endanger the faith of others and to wound the hearts of believers. He was exhorted "to think and speak with great care and holy fear, so as to avoid all just occasion of offence to Christian minds." Undoubtedly his frankness of speech hurt many anxious minds during that age of transition but this must be judged in the light of his absolute veracity. He cared only for truth and he told it just as he saw it. In his endeavor to guide the public mind in relation to problems of present interest he never shirked his responsibility by falling back on ambiguous phraseology. Dods never deliberately sought controversy; but to many of his contemporaries he must have seemed uncompromising in his insistence upon speaking the truth as he saw it, regardless of the consequences. His own attitude towards this practice of speaking the truth is expressed in a quotation he often used when speaking to groups of young men:

The highest truth the wise man sees he will fearlessly utter, knowing that, let what may come of it, he is thus playing his right part in the world; knowing that if he can effect the change he aims at--well; if not--well also, though not so well."¹

In addition to Dods' plain-spoken manner there was another characteristic of his teaching which drew him into controversy. His teaching was often apologetic in nature. His two most controversial sermons were of this type. Unfortunately his critics

1. From Herbert Spencer. Source not found, but quoted in an appreciation of Dods written by William Martin, Glasgow Herald, April 27, 1909.

failed to remember that in order to form a fair estimate of any literary production or spoken discourse it is necessary to bear in mind the purpose which its author meant it to serve. The object which a writer seeks to attain gives to what he writes its distinctive form and character. Both sermons under question were apologetic answers to some of the sceptical questions of the day. Dods and his supporters tried without success to convince the critics that these sermons were intended not as an assault on Christianity, but as a vindication of it. Both in 1876, when he delivered the sermon on "Revelation and Inspiration," and in 1889, when he delivered the sermon on "What is a Christian?" he was addressing special gatherings and he consequently dispensed with those qualifications which he would have introduced in addressing a more popular assembly. In neither case did the preacher mentally say, "I am writing for critics, theologians, and heresy-hunters, so I must be on my guard, and so thoroughly patch my sermon with parenthesis that the intricacy may defy, or at least bewilder, all hostile criticism."¹ Rather, the preacher was simply stating the truth as he understood it. When in 1890 the College Committee characterized the manner in which Dods presented the Gospel as "questionable and fitted to do harm,"² he wrote them explaining his purpose:

I feel bound to say...that I have positive knowledge of several instances in which the sermon complained of has accomplished precisely the good I intended, has shown men the way through their difficulties, and has enabled

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1. Dr. Parker on Dr. Dods' Sermon (Edinburgh: Macniven and Wallace, 1890), p. 2.
 2. Proceedings and Debates, 1890, Appendix V, p. 21.

them to accept Christ. This statement may be criticised and the Christian faith of the persons I allude to may be lightly esteemed; but such criticism concerns me not at all. I must do the work I am called to do. I am delighted that other men should put things differently, but I also have an evangelistic function which I cannot decline to discharge.¹

We can conclude, then, that although Dods was not primarily a controversialist, he was drawn into controversy because of the nature of the times and the nature of his teaching. His views on inspiration came into prominence before his Church was ready to accept them, and on this and other aspects of Christian doctrine he uttered his views with an extreme frankness which offended those who could not detect his apologetic interest.

The Unifying Principle of His Life and Work.

In attempting to determine how Dods became involved in controversy we have touched upon the unifying principle of his life and work--his innate, instinctive love of teaching. It was this which gave to his preaching its characteristic quality and it was this also which affected the style and content of his books. It was as a teacher that he made his mark in the world. He was not only a teacher in the pulpit and a teacher in the class-room, but a teacher in the forum of life. It was instinctive with Dods to seek to guide the public mind in relation to problems of present interest and to compel the public to look at unfamiliar truths. Throughout his long life there was no pleasure to compare with that which he received from teaching. As a student at the University and at New College he found such satisfaction in teaching

1. Ibid., Appendix V., p. 30.

that by the time he reached his difficult years as a probationer he seriously considered making teaching his vocation. Happily, he discovered that he did not have to leave the ministry in order to be a teacher, but could as a preacher give full expression to his didactic skill. The result was impressive. He was so successful in teaching Christian truths to his own congregation and to the young students who visited his church that he was soon recognized as one of Scotland's most influential ministers. When in 1889 he went as a professor to New College he stepped into a position which was really not new and addressed himself to duties with which he was already familiar. The students knew him already by his books and they accepted him at once as their master. Dods' pre-eminent role in the life of the church was surely that of a teacher.

II. HIS CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE NINETEENTH CENTURY CHURCH IN SCOTLAND

The Effectiveness of His Literary Activity.

Marcus Dods was author of twenty-six books, joint author of nine additional books, contributor to several encyclopedias and periodicals, editor of twenty-one volumes, co-editor of fifty others, and translator of three works. From the days of

his probation period until his death his tireless literary effort never ceased.¹ In order to form a critical appraisal of his prodigious activity as an author it is important to view this phase of his work as an extension of his teaching ministry and to evaluate his literary efforts in the light of the needs of his day.

His books in relation to his teaching ministry. With only a few exceptions everything Dods published was first prepared as a sermon or a lecture. Fourteen books accredited to his name represented sermons which were actually preached before congregations. It has been previously emphasized that Dods was pre-eminently a teacher in the pulpit. Sunday after Sunday he led his congregation through a searching study of Scripture. It was his practice to select a book such as the Gospel of John or a topic such as "The Parables" and treat it extensively over a period of months. Consequently it was not a difficult task to incorporate such a series into book form. When his twenty-five year ministry in Renfield Free

1. His major works are listed chronologically in the bibliography. Other works are grouped according to the nature of the contribution.

Church terminated, he never again had the opportunity to write a series of sermons which could be issued in print. His books of sermons published after 1895, namely, Why Be A Christian, How To Become Like Christ, and Christ and Man, were compilations of miscellaneous sermons.

His two most scholarly works, The Gospel of St. John and The Epistle to the Hebrews (in Vols. I and IV of The Expositor's Greek Testament) and his article "Epistle to the Galatians" in Hastings' A Dictionary of the Bible, contained sections of revised material taken directly from his New College lectures. Mohammed, Buddha, and Christ and The Bible: Its Nature and Origin are published versions of lectures delivered to two colleges; one in England, the other in America. The latter book incorporated much material from his New College course on "The Canon."

Thus his teaching ministry directly accounts for all except eight of his books. Of these eight, four are aids to Bible study and are therefore closely related to his teaching ministry though not direct products of it. These four are The Book of Genesis and The Post-Exilic Prophets: Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi (Handbooks for Bible Classes Series), An Introduction to the New Testament, and Commentary on Thessalonians (Vol. III of A Popular Commentary on The New Testament). Of those that remain, three are of devotional nature and one is a collection of essays.

His books in relation to the needs of his day. Dods' published works appeared at a crucial time in the religious life of Britain. The impact of rationalism, criticism, and scientific

inquiry had disturbed the faith of thousands. Some began to neglect the Bible because it no longer seemed relevant to their lives. Gradually their interest in religion was being replaced by a spirit of indifference to the Christian life. On the other hand, there were great numbers of Christian people who remained loyal to the Church even though they could not understand how their old views of the Bible could be reconciled with the new ideas of science and criticism. It was upon these two groups of people--those who were drifting away from the Church and those who remained faithfully in the Church but were searching for a more satisfactory approach to Scripture--that Dods' books made the greatest impression and performed their most effective work.

The fourteen books containing Dods' sermons achieved tremendous popularity in their day. All of them went into a second edition and several of them went into as many as ten or twelve editions. Although in these books Dods rigidly adhered to sound principles of interpretation, he never discussed critical problems. These books were not intended for the scholarly world, but for lay people and for parish ministers. His immense learning and scholarship were evident but never obtrusive in these works. The way in which he dealt with Biblical truth and with human life made his books appeal to all types of people. Both the mature saint and the man who had all but lost hold of faith found nurture in his writings.

Dods was considered by many of his generation as a prince of Old Testament Lecturers. In such books as Isaac, Jacob, Joseph; The Book of Genesis (The Expositor's Bible); Israel's Iron Age:

Sketches from the Period of the Judges; The Visions of a Prophet; Studies in Zechariah; the old world of the East seemed to wake into life before his eyes, and patriarchs of a primitive civilization were clothed with universal human characteristics which do not alter with the years. But his talents were most clearly seen in his expositions of the New Testament. He had a rare power of applying the truths of the gospel to the conscience and hearts of men, and he constantly kept people aware of the value of the Bible as a guide to daily life. His books of sermons based on the New Testament were: The Prayer That Teaches to Pray; The Epistles of Our Lord to the Seven Churches; The Parables of Our Lord (Matthew); The Parables of Our Lord (Luke); The First Epistle To The Corinthians (The Expositor's Bible); The Gospel of St. John, Volume I (The Expositor's Bible); and The Gospel of St. John, Volume II (The Expositor's Bible). These books, in addition to being read by laymen, were highly prized by parish ministers, and even today some of these volumes can be found on the shelves of many ministers in America and Canada as well as in Britain.

Turning now to a different category of Dods' literary work we find that the books in which he used a critical approach were just as effective and popular as those of an homiletical nature. His own words enable us to understand his aims in this second class of books:

That the faith of the Christian should be healthy enough to find nutriment in every discovery of criticism goes without saying. That all truth must help and not hinder the cause of Christ is an axiom. But recent ~~averments~~ ^{assessments} of criticism regarding Scripture have certainly disquieted many minds, and some re-assuring voice is greatly needed.¹

1. Dods, The Expositor, 4th Series, 4:148-9, 1891.

He endeavored to be that reassuring voice to those in his immediate surroundings and to the wider audience he reached through his books. His motive was not simply to inform the public in regard to recent Biblical scholarship but to enable them to know the truth about Scripture and to cherish a defensible faith in the Bible. He wanted Christian people to recognize that the results of Biblical science could no longer be ignored.

It is significant to note the publication date of his handbook on Genesis, for it is an indication of the outspoken honesty and courage of the man. This book was presented to the public in 1882, just one year after William Robertson Smith was expelled from his Chair in Aberdeen Free Church College. Dods, while differing from Smith in regard to the Graf-Wellhausen theory and other details of Old Testament authorship and construction, agreed with Smith that the Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch was an untenable theory. In his book on Genesis he plainly and convincingly spoke his views and at the same time informed his reader of the conclusions of continental scholars. Discernible throughout the book is his awareness of the difficulties with which the average parson approached the study of Genesis. The following excerpts are typical of his treatment of the problem;

But while critics are agreed that material from a variety of sources has entered into the composition of the book, considerable difference of opinion prevails regarding the precise number and nature of these sources. One who is entirely ignorant of the methods of criticism will certainly smile at the assurance with which an experienced scholar like Ewald distributes a passage among several contributors. But some, even of the soberest scholars, see three or four hands in the work, and their opinion has much to recommend it. [Then follows his discussion of the narratives generally designated by the terms

"Elohist," "Later Elohist," "Jehovist," and "Redactor."⁷ This may seem to the uninitiated by far too cumbrous a theory of the composition of a book apparently so simple as Genesis. And critics are themselves the first to acknowledge that much still remains obscure regarding its various parts. But it seems beyond dispute that at least two main threads are discernible in the narrative. No one can read the book without becoming aware that he is frequently presented with varying accounts of the same event.¹

The delightful introduction to this book is one of the best pieces of narrative writing he ever produced. It reflects his singular fair-mindedness, his sober, reverent judgment, and his sensitivity to the attitude of the average reader.

In format, content, and design his book, An Introduction to the New Testament, was a more scholarly work than the one on Genesis and undoubtedly it appealed to the more educated reader. Dods' wide reading and thorough acquaintance with the field of Biblical scholarship illuminate the pages of this book from beginning to end. In the footnotes, he refers his reader to Renan, Westcott, Jowett, Lightfoot, Wetstein, Stanley, Godet, Hilgenfeld, Weiss, Reuss, Bengel, Meyer, Ewald, Baur, Pfleiderer, and others too numerous to mention. We are impressed with his appropriate citations of the early Church Fathers as well as his references to classical Greek and Latin writers when dealing with an obscure or disputed point. In this book he discusses from a critical standpoint the authorship, authenticity, date, purpose and setting of the various New Testament books as well as certain historical factors such as the scandals in the Corinthian Church, the Jews in Rome, the beginnings of Gnosticism, composition of the Galatian Church, and so forth. Many people in Scotland considered this small book as the standard introduction to the New Testament until

1. Dods, The Book of Genesis (Handbooks for Bible Classes Series), pp. ix-x.

Moffatt's more elaborate Introduction was published in 1911.

The other books in which Dods used a critical approach are not essentially different from either the one on Genesis or the Introduction. It is not necessary, therefore, to discuss each one individually before making our summary statements about this category of his literary work.

While always maintaining an essentially evangelical viewpoint, Dods freely approached the Scripture and applied to it the historical method of interpretation. He not only acknowledged the cogency of higher criticism's main conclusions but also endeavored to inform the public of criticism's most recent investigations. If from the first, Dods had been a man of distinctly liberal or broad tendencies, his comments on the results of criticism would have made little impression. But when he, a conservative, trusted, and admired minister of the Free Church, frankly accepted new positions, many people felt compelled to reconsider their own positions.

Editor. Not only as an author but also as an editor Dods sought to educate, inform, and reassure the public on matters pertaining to Biblical study. In 1879¹ he and his intimate friend Alexander Whyte began to edit fifty small inexpensive volumes entitled Handbooks for Bible Classes. The co-editors believed that there was a need for these books because "the immense stores of Biblical learning which have now been accumulated have not been made accessible," especially to private readers of Scripture in

1. This was the year after the first Dods Case came before the Assembly. The Robertson Smith Case was still agitating the Church at this time.

their homes and to young scholars. Although not all the volumes were of the highest quality and value, several excellent scholars contributed to this series. Professor T.M. Lindsay wrote the three volumes on Mark, Luke and Acts; Professor A.B. Davidson wrote on Hebrews; Professor J.S. Candlish on Ephesians; Professor James Stalker wrote two volumes on the life of Jesus and the life of Paul. Dods himself wrote the volumes on The Book of Genesis and The Post-Exilian Prophets: Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi. This series was extremely successful in its efforts to popularize modern methods of Biblical study. The Times referred to this "series of excellent and cheap handbooks" as perhaps Dods' "chief legacy" for they "have placed the results [of Biblical learning] within the reach not only of Scottish, but of large numbers of English readers."¹

Limitations of his books. The major reason why Dods' books never made a great impact on the scholarly world is that most of his writings were intended to be of a popular nature. Dods' first volume on the parables, for instance, appeared in 1883, only one year after A.B. Bruce's The Parabolic Teaching of Christ. Both Dods and Bruce adhered to the historical method of interpretation and were thorough-going in their rejection of allegorical interpretations. Both authors utilized the conclusions and discoveries of modern criticism, and both employed the comparative method of New Testament Theology. Bruce's book was immediately hailed by the scholarly world and remained the definitive work in English

1. Times, April 27, 1909.

on the parables until 1935 when C.H. Dodd's The Parables of the Kingdom was published. Although Dods' two volumes on the parables were printed in seven editions and received excellent reviews they never received much recognition in academic circles. His books on the parables were obviously of a devotional and homiletical nature, while Bruce definitely intended his work to be a more elaborate and critical treatment of the subject. It would be unjust to judge both books by the same standard when they were obviously meant to serve different purposes.

One other example suffices to indicate that even Dods' most popular books with the public failed to satisfy the critical reader. His book on John (Vol. I) for The Expositor's Bible received severe criticism for its failure to discuss in detail the problem of authorship. This omission was not due to Dods' ignorance, lack of interest, or timidity,¹ for he freely discussed this problem with his New College students and also in his contribution to The Expositor's Greek Testament. In fact, The Critical Review in 1898 recorded that it would not be easy "for the student to lay his hand on a better statement of the Johannine problem than is given here by Dr. Dods."²

His commentaries in The Expositor's Greek Testament were valuable, accurate contributions to scholarship but they, too, failed to make a great impact on the scholarly world. Although Dods' thorough knowledge of Greek enabled him to set forth numerous

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1. One foreign reviewer suggested that Dods took the easiest way out in an attempt to avoid controversy.
 2. The Critical Review, 8:92, 1898.

original ideas about the text, the bulk of his work was a compilation of the most tenable views of others, and in reading his commentaries today one is distracted by his frequent reference to such unfamiliar names as Kypke, Elsner, Olshausen, Koetsveld, and others. It could be said too that the limits set by the character and nature of this series did not allow the development of much creativity.

Probably no one was more aware of the limitations of his books than Dods himself, for his purpose in publishing his works was not to establish a reputation for original scholarship but to help meet the needs of the hour. This he did in a very effective way. His homiletical books were beneficial to all types of people, especially to those who were beginning to doubt the relevancy of the Bible, and his volumes of a critical nature proved their worth as they impressed thousands with the necessity of recognizing the results of criticism.

His Influence On Religious Thought in the Free Church.

Since his death, Marcus Dods' outstanding influence on religious thought in the Free Church has become obscured and has tended to be overlooked, but in his own day his contributions in this respect were widely recognized. Among the changes which took place during the last quarter of the nineteenth century, he was partially responsible for the following: acceptance of a new view of inspiration, a broader interpretation of the Confession of Faith's teaching on inspiration, education of the general public on Biblical issues, increasing recognition of the fruitful benefits of

Biblical criticism, greater freedom of critical inquiry, and less demand for total uniformity on points of doctrine.

Acceptance of a new theory of inspiration. Dods' sermon on "Revelation and Inspiration" preached in 1876 was on all sides acknowledged to be the first public utterance of its kind from within the Free Church. The publication of this sermon forced the issue of inspiration on the Church and, as it were, compelled the Church and the general public to consider Dods' views. Although this was not his intention in publishing the sermon, it helped to promote one of his aims which was to investigate, to prove and to press home to his generation a more tenable theory of inspiration. He was convinced that until the Church totally rejected the theory of verbal inerrancy, she would continue to be responsible for much of the current scepticism and for seriously hampering the efforts of Biblical theology to apprehend the differences introduced into the New Testament by the idiosyncrasies of its human authors.

Within a relatively short time, his aim was largely fulfilled. By 1890 it was declared in the General Assembly of the Free Church that the new theory of inspiration was extensively adopted. Professor W.G. Blaikie of New College, in a letter of this same year, indicated that if discipline were attempted against Dods for his view on this point, half the Church would have to be disciplined.¹ Dr. John Adam urged the Assembly of 1890 to recognize this fact. Though he himself did not approve of the "broad

1. William G., Blaikie, Letter to the Rev. Andrew A. Bonar, D.D., p. 11.

view" he knew it was beyond question that a number "of the most earnest and believing defenders of Christianity had adopted that view."¹

It should be noted that Dods' influence, especially with regard to inspiration, extended beyond the Free Church. A minister of an Edinburgh parish expressed the opinion of many within the Church of Scotland in Dods' time when he said, "Dr. Dods has done a great service to his generation in helping to lead it safely through the transition from old views of inspiration to others, revised and modified, and yet high and worthy still."²

A broader interpretation of the teaching of the Confession of Faith on inspiration. Dods also was instrumental in the movement toward a more liberal interpretation of the teaching of the Confession of Faith on inspiration. The commonly held attitude in the Free Church in 1877 was that views of inspiration such as he uttered were inconsistent with the Confession. This was the issue most debated when the Dods Case was being considered. In the crucial meeting of Presbytery on November 29, 1877, only a majority of three (the vote was 54 to 51) prevented a motion being passed which would have condemned Dods' views as contrary to the Word of God and the standards and teaching of the Church. Both Professor A.B. Bruce, by his explanation of the Confession's phrase "entire perfection," and Professor T.M. Lindsay, by a similar exposition of the phrase "commit the same wholly into

1. Proceedings and Debates, 1890, p. 73.

2. Rev. Dr. Fisher, Morningside Parish Church, quoted in The Scotsman, May 3, 1909.

writing," made significant contributions to their co-presbyters' understanding of this problem, and they no doubt were instrumental in bringing the majority vote as high as fifty-four. Dr. John Adam also reminded his ecclesiastical brethren that the views they might hold and the views they might enforce were very different things; that if Dods' views were not specifically condemned by the standard of their Church then he was entitled to hold them.

As the Dods controversy wound its way through the various levels of church courts during 1877-1878 and was revived for a brief moment in 1889 and again with force in 1890, discussion of the proper interpretation of the Confession's teaching on inspiration was inevitable. Many who formerly thought that belief in the Confession's doctrine of inspiration implied belief in verbal inerrancy came to realize that the Confession of Faith carefully avoids committing itself to any theory of the mode or degree of inspiration. By 1890 a pronounced majority in the Free Church had become convinced that views such as Dods' were not excluded by the Confession. All this meant a marked change not in the confessional doctrine, but in the actual mind of the Church on the subject.¹

Education of the public on Biblical issues. We have already discussed the significant part which Dods' books played in

1. The College Committee in 1890 made it clear that it was not the Confessional doctrine but the prevailing view under the Confession which needed revisal. Proceedings and Debates, 1890, Appendix V, p. 29.

popularizing the new Biblical scholarship. But it was not only through books that the public was informed and educated on the issues facing the Church. The controversies themselves greatly affected the intellectual climate of Scotland during this period. When the Smith and Dods Cases broke upon the Church in 1876-1877, the majority within the Scottish Churches were not only ill-informed in matters pertaining to Biblical scholarship but also had little interest in it.¹ But throughout the thirteen year period from 1877 to 1890 ideas on the subject were bandied about in countless articles, pamphlets, memorials, editorials, and letters to the newspapers. Even if the average man did not accept the critical views he at least became familiar with them. Prolonged discussion during the years of controversy gradually effected an education of the public on the issues involved. The public press played its part in stimulating tension and excitement as the judicial proceedings approached periods of crises. General interest in the cases was manifested by the crowds which thronged the meetings of Assembly in 1878, 1880, 1881, 1889, and 1890. This interest extended far beyond the bounds of the Free Church and even beyond Scotland. The Robertson Smith proceedings were watched with keen interest by English and continental scholars while the Dods-Bruce cases attracted more attention in America.

Increasing recognition of the fruitful benefits of Biblical criticism. Dods could not be satisfied simply to educate and inform the public in matters of Biblical scholarship. He wanted to reassure anxious minds that were puzzled and disturbed by some

1. Dods wrote in 1877 that even such a subject as inspiration and revelation was one "about which men have thought too little and are unwilling to think much."

of the conclusions of higher criticism. It cannot be denied that Dods' out-spoken utterances sometimes caused alarm within the Church. But neither can it be denied that his words often did much to allay the misunderstandings and fears in regard to Biblical criticism. He acknowledged that all criticism was not earnest and wise.

There are frivolous and foolish critics, as there are alas! frivolous and foolish men in all professions....Such eccentricities as the recent affirmation that not one of the so-called Pauline epistles is from the hand of Paul¹ are mere excrescences and have no solid connection with the great trunk of criticism, which is pushing itself more and more into the light of day, and can be traced by distinct and assured advances as clearly as the record of the tree can be read in its rings.¹

"If criticism err," he reasoned, "we cannot appeal from criticism to something else, but only from criticism tentative and immature to criticism mature and final." If criticism and free discussion have opened the door to extravagances, it is they also that will eject them. For nothing is left unquestioned and untested. "To fear that, in the process, damage will accrue to the Bible is to fear that what we have taken for gold may turn out to be only alloy."²

In books, addresses and lectures Dods frankly stated the results of criticism and at the same time attempted to show how little cause for anxiety existed. Through his influence a wide audience came to recognize the fruitful benefits of Biblical criticism.

1. Dods, Recent Progress in Theology, p. 10.

2. Ibid., pp. 10-11.

Greater freedom of critical inquiry. Dods was always fearless in uttering what he believed to be the truth. Many ministers of his generation held views similar to his but they were hesitant to speak out. They were unwilling to disturb the faith of any. As if to remove error were to disturb faith! As if a faith built on error ought to be left for ever undisturbed! Dods would be in agreement with St. Gregory the Great who said, "If a scandal be caused by the utterance of truth, better the creation of the scandal than the suppression of the truth." Yet how could the determination to ascertain the very truth result in permanent damage to theology or to Christian faith? asked Dods.

So long as science was under authority, and it was wicked to believe that the earth went round the sun, so long the truth could not be discovered. And so long as theology is similarly dealt with, the results will be similar. It is feared that if the same freedom of individual investigation be admitted into theology as is practised in scientific pursuits, every man will have a creed of his own, and instead of the old cuius regio illius religio, there will now be as many religions as there are individuals. The very contrary is the truth. There is no hope of attaining unanimity in theological matters except by the use of ¹ that method which has won unanimity in scientific beliefs.

Dods believed that the supreme aim of liberalism in religion is not emancipation from all dogma, but is to get a more certain hold of positive truth that will be the foundation of dogmas which can fear no examination.

He admitted that there was some danger in casting loose from old moorings and "meeting the tentative theories, new suggestions, and half formulated doctrines which are carried down by the stream of modern thought." There was danger, as he saw it, for the young and for those whose faith was superficial.

1. Ibid., p. 11.

Necessarily this age deals much in negations. Its first duty is to apply the acid of criticism to all scholastic overgrowths of Christianity, and allow it to eat away everything that has been interposed between the soul and Christ. And, of course, there is the danger that those whose faith has not yet struck deep into the very heart and essence of our religion should feel that all is gone,¹ when what is superficial and non-essential is destroyed.

Yet taking into account such possible danger, Dods firmly believed in "re-opening closed questions and reinvestigating the truth of critical conclusions and theological dogmas." Even if some error resulted the Church had nothing to fear. According to him, the history of doctrine showed that whenever a new heresy arose, or a supposed heresy, the Church set itself to discover how much of truth there was in it. There was always found to be some measure of truth in it, and some modification of the old opinion required. The Church has never been in the habit of saying, These views are novel, therefore they are untrue. The Church has always said, This is novel, therefore we will examine it.

The annexation of Christian truth has proceeded very much as the annexation of territory....to the old Roman Empire. Some savage begins nibbling at the frontier. We examine his claim; we see what kind of land he has; and we put down his rebellion and annexation. Precisely so has the Church dealt with all suggestions of new truth. These suggestions may turn out to be heresy; but the Church was careful to know whether it was heresy or not before it condemned.²

This had been the practice of the Church catholic from the beginning, it seemed to Dods. His reading of the history of doctrine convinced him that all attainment in truth has been made by the Church in the face of error.

It is more difficult to estimate the results Dods achieved as

1. Ibid., p. 13.

2. Proceedings and Debates, 1881, p. 173.

an exponent of the freedom of critical inquiry. In this phase of the movement for broadening thought within the Free Church he was one among many. Even men such as Whyte and Rainy, while not expounding the new critical views, earnestly desired that the Church allow freedom of critical inquiry.¹ With astonishing rapidity the Free Church came to accept this position. Dods' election to his chair in 1889 was the first decisive act of the Free Church that secured the victory of liberal principles. The decision of the 1890 Assembly was interpreted as an even greater victory for liberty of thought and discussion and freedom of investigation.

Less demand for total uniformity on points of doctrine. It was not just in relation to inspiration and criticism that Dods was a fearless adapter of the old faith to the new thought. He warned his generation against the danger of blind adherence to tradition of any point of doctrine. To the students at the Edinburgh University Gathering he said, "If, then, we are accepting God's forgiveness, and living humbly in the sunshine of His favour, we need not be seriously disturbed in spirit if we find that we cannot accept what is known as the orthodox theory of the Atonement."² In regard to the Incarnation he maintained, "There is a defect in our conception of the Lord's human nature until we attribute to him the mental limitations as well as the bodily weaknesses of our nature."³ Similarly, speaking on other

1. Simpson, The Life of Principal Rainy, Vol. I, pp. 398-99 ff.

2. Dods, What is a Christian?, p. 7.

3. Dods, Sermon MS., "Christ's Youth," p. 7.

doctrines, he made statements which were intended to place emphasis on points that had been minimized, overlooked, or obscured by the traditionalists. The Church in his day, he felt, had allowed faith in Christ to become identified in the popular mind with faith in a number of doctrines regarding Christ, and had thus made faith needlessly difficult. It was his expressed conviction that "what Christ Himself required in His followers should be enough for the Church to require."¹

According to Dods, narrow and rigid orthodoxy, if not checked, hardens into heresy. In discussing the history of criticism he told his New College students, "The narrow and rigid orthodoxy of the first century became heretical in the second, a process which has been always going on and which we may see illustrated in our own country."² Thus, by speaking out against all forms of narrow orthodoxy he rendered immense service to the Church in a time of theological transition by disengaging the essence of the faith from some of its traditional accretions. Few men in the Free Church knew so well as he the currents of modern thought, or were so well equipped for re-stating Christian truth in forms that would commend it to the sceptical or wavering.

Others associated with Dods in the progressive movement. We do not mean to convey the impression that it was Dods alone who was responsible for the revolution in religious thought which occurred in nineteenth century Scotland and in the Free Church. William Robertson Smith was unquestionably the most responsible

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1. Dods, "How Far is the Church Responsible for the Present Scepticism," The Expositor, 8: 298, 1888.
 2. Dods, Lecture MS., "History of Criticism IV," p. 8.

for breaking up the hard crust of traditionalism so that fruitful seeds could be planted and the harvest reaped by men in later years. But Dods was also a pioneer in this respect. He, along with Smith, was among the first and the most outspoken ministers in the Free Church to recognize and declare the valuable contributions of modern Biblical criticism. Certainly it was Dods who first led the Free Church into a consideration of a more tenable view of inspiration. Closely associated with him in the movement for broadening evangelical opinion in the Free Church were Bruce, Lindsay, Salmond, Candlish, and Whyte; but to Dods and Smith must go recognition for being the first to bring the new ideas into prominence and giving the progressive movement its initial impetus. And in one important respect Dods' influence in the Free Church was more effective than Smith's.

Dods' gifts, acquirements, and reputation fitted him supremely for his task of readjusting the faith to the changing issues of the time. At various points we have touched upon the fact that people were receptive to new ideas which Dods presented because of their confidence in him. His extraordinary ability, character, and accurate scholarship were universally acknowledged. His books endeared him to many people whose lives had been enriched by his penetrating expositions of Scripture. Robertson Smith, on the other hand, never held the sustained confidence of the majority once the controversy began. He sometimes conveyed an impression of hostility and arrogance which offended many, and thereby lessened his capacity for permanently effecting a change of thought within the Church.

It was of the utmost importance, then, to the progressive movement in the Free Church that Dods' perfect candor, sanity of judgment, and scrupulous fairness to opponents, combined with his scholarship and rare spiritual insight, commanded the respect and won the confidence of the great majority. Yet even in this regard he did not stand alone. That the Free Church swiftly adjusted itself to new ideas on Biblical interpretation and religious thought was due in no small measure to the influence of the men associated with Dods in the movement for broadening thought. A profound and lasting impression was made on the Free Church by the fact that the men who led this movement were known pre-eminently for thoughtful preaching, evangelical zeal, deep piety, and stout defense of the basic tenets of Christianity.

Dods' own theological position was always essentially conservative, though he did not hesitate to discard traditional phraseology. He mediated between a liberalism in theology that was too speculative or too rationalizing, and a conservatism that settled questions by shutting its eyes. His mind was candid and open, but cautious and characteristically devout. His divergence from orthodoxy was always more apparent than real, and by the time of his death he had come to be regarded as a great steadying force in the church.

In conclusion it should be noted that Dods' influence on religious thought in the late nineteenth century reached far beyond Scotland. This was due primarily to his literary efforts, but the controversies in which he was engaged also affected his reputation abroad. Dr. Rainy once said that all the world knew Dods' views of inspiration and therefore waited with keen interest

the announcement of the results of the 1889 professorial election. While this, of course, was an exaggeration, it nevertheless was intended to indicate the extent of Dods' influence, for Rainy was in Australia during 1889 and observed there the interest in Dods. English and Irish newspapers in 1909 declared that there "is probably not one great Church leader, Anglican or Nonconformist, who does not feel the death of Dr. Marcus Dods as a personal sorrow."¹ His death "will arouse a sense of loss in England wherever men care for the devout maintenance of critical views," recorded the Times.² An even clearer indication of the high esteem in which the Christian world held Dods is manifested in the following resolution which was unanimously adopted by the Protestant Ministerial Association of Winnipeg, Canada:

This Protestant Ministerial Association shares in the sense of loss which the death of Dr. Marcus Dods of Edinburgh has brought not on one church only, but on the Christian world.

The genuine and unostentatious scholarship of Dr. Dods...his fine interpretive insight and gifts of lucid expression, his all pervasive devotedness have through the fruitful years of a long life laid the Christian Church under great obligations. Especially does the Church owe him a debt of gratitude for the wise and gentle mediation which not without suffering to himself, he exercised in an age which has felt acutely the conflict between tradition and criticism, and which has been forced to build for its faith new intellectual habitations.³

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1. Morning Leader, May 1, 1909. See also Belfast Northern Whig, April, 28, 1909; Yorkshire Weekly Observer, May 1, 1909; Eastern Daily Press Norwich, May 3, 1909; Dublin Independent, April 27, 1909.
 2. Times, April 27, 1909.
 3. Press cuttings from Winnipeg, Canada, newspaper, April 28, 1909, including news article about the resolution passed by the Protestant Ministerial Association and an appreciation of Dods written by the Rev. Principal Patrick of Manitoba College, Canada. The motion which was unanimously adopted by the Association was

His Training Of The Ministry.

One of the greatest though less tangible contributions made by Dods to the Free Church of Scotland was his share in the training of the ministry. At New College he set a standard of life and work which changed the outlook and the ideals of hundreds of theological students who studied under him. Those who were acquainted with student life immediately before and immediately after he came were profoundly impressed by the effect which his presence had upon the College. A new sense of purpose seemed to be evident in some of the students as they became more industrious and conscientious in their theological studies. Other students testified that many of their doubts had been removed by the teaching of the professor of New Testament Exegesis.

The students did not have to be told that Dods was devoting over ten hours a day to his work as a professor. This was evident in the quality and scope of his lectures. Even the less observant students were often reminded of his high regard for industry because he did not hesitate to display his impatience with those who refused to work hard. It seems most appropriate that his first address as Principal in 1907 was both an appeal for diligent toil and an attack against laziness.

It is one of the most discreditable but one of the best ascertained facts that in not a few instances the minister is the idlest man in his parish--not toiling for the good of his people, not seeing to it that they

moved by Rev. Dr. Bland and seconded by Rev. Dr. Mackinnon. These press cuttings are in the collection of Dods' family papers, formerly in the possession of the late Dr. and Mrs. A. Herbert Gray.

are instructed, allowing the young people to grow up in ignorance, and himself losing the love and respect of his people.¹

He felt that ultimately the theological colleges were to blame for the ministers who failed in their duty, because the colleges allowed men to pass into the ministry without sufficient guarantee that they had acquired habits of work. Being only one man he could not exert direct influence on the theological students in other colleges, but at New College he did everything within his power to encourage students to diligent industry. It was his conviction that godliness which does not prompt a man to work as hard and for as many hours as other men is simply dishonesty and its fruits must one way or other appear in disaster.

Soon after his students were ordained they discovered how much Dods had given them. As they compared the fruits of the minister who refused to work, with the fruits of the minister who toiled faithfully, they knew that Dods' stress on industry had produced in them a priceless habit.

Another contribution which he made to the training of the ministry was the way in which he encouraged the spiritual life of the students. A.B. Bruce was one who clearly recognized Dods' influence upon the young men who sat under him.

Beyond question it is in men like Dr. Dods that the youth of our church, who are to be its future ministers, can find the nearest approximation to what Christ was in spirit and religious attitude. To be their scholars is in effect to be in the school of Jesus. For a theological seminary to lack such men in its teaching staff is simply

1. Dods, Lecture MS. "Welcoming Address to Students, 1907," p.4.

death; prophetic freedom, fire and power replaced by dry scholasticism, rabbinical pedantry, and dull commonplace.¹

Dods realized that theological training involves not only the transmitting of knowledge but also the nurture and development of spiritual qualities, and he, in his own quiet way, did as much to encourage the students' spiritual growth as he did to stimulate their intellectual growth.

III. EPILOGUE

During the fifty-one years which have passed since Marcus Dods died on April 26, 1909, various features of his life and work have become obscured. This is due not only to the passing of time and to the limited biographical material available, but to the fact that even his own contemporaries found it difficult to understand the seeming contradictions in his career. For six years he could not get a church and then almost over-night he was considered as one of Scotland's finest preachers; by some he was denounced as a heretic while others claimed that his personal faith and piety were a living apologetic for Christianity; he heartily disliked participation in church

1. A.B. Bruce, Biblical World, 7:250, April, 1896.

courts, yet for a considerable period of his adult life he was involved in ecclesiastical controversy; he always showed shyness and reserve towards men of his own generation, but young men claimed him as their own because of his ability to speak to them openly as friend and comrade; he was not a theologian in the strictest sense, yet he profoundly influenced the theological thought and temper of his age and country--these are the strange anomalies in the career of Marcus Dods. In attempting to shed light upon some of these obscure and puzzling aspects of his life we have at various points come upon that which was the unifying feature of his ministry--his extraordinary teaching ability. We have seen that he was one who had a natural affinity for teaching, a deep delight in young men, a growing interest in the subjects he taught. We have noted his ability to bring out the best in his students, to stir young minds to inquiry, to quickly win the confidence and respect of those whom he taught, to inspire others to diligent industry, to quicken faith in Jesus Christ. We have examined his didactic tendencies in his preaching, his literary work, and his professorial duties, and have formed critical appraisals of his contributions in these fields.

Dods himself believed that "between the age of twelve and the age of thirty, a man's future is determined, his opinions formed if not fixed, his character moulded almost beyond alteration, his aims in life chosen." To a large extent this was true in his case. Looking back on his youth and early manhood we can observe

the foundations being laid for his illustrious teaching ministry. We note his mature reading habits, his thoroughness in digesting all the best that he read, and his pleasure in communicating to others that which he had learned. Even in these early years his diligent scholarship was not so much an end in itself, but rather the basis of that which he transmitted to others. Other aspects of his later life can be seen in germinal form during his youth and probationary period. We note the beginnings of his literary career, his careful preparation of sermons, his fondness for the lecturing method in preaching. We observe his struggles with doubt and discouragement which enabled him in later years to minister effectively to young men who were undergoing similar experiences. His shyness, his dislike for church courts, and the reality of his own religious experience, all can be detected in the life of the young probationer. All that he later became is more understandable in the light of his first thirty years.

Although the full extent of his influence is not well known today, he made a deep impression upon the age in which he lived. His contributions were great measured in reference to the needs of his time. But his personal greatness consisted not so much in any special brilliance of talent or achievement as in the superlative degree in which he exhibited the qualities of human character and Christian faith which are open to all men.

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b) Reviews of Dods' Books.

Biblical World (Chicago), 4:236, September, 1894.
11:363, May, 1898.
5:380-2, May, 1895.

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	December 1, 1877.
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Aberdeen Evening Express, April 26, 1909.

Aberdeen Evening Gazette, April 26, 1909.

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Aberdeen Journal, April 27, 1909.
 May 3, 1909.

Aberdeen Weekly Journal, April 28, 1909.

Cannock News, April 30, 1909.

Dundee Advertiser, April 27, 1909.

Dundee Courier, April 27, 1909.

Dundee Evening Telegraph, April 26, 1909.

Edinburgh Evening Dispatch, April 26, 1909.
 May 3, 1909.

Edinburgh Evening News, April 26, 1909.

Edinburgh Weekly Scotsman, May 1, 1909.

Fife Free Press, May 1, 1909.

Glasgow Evening Citizen, April 26, 1909.

Glasgow Evening Times, April 26, 1909.

Glasgow News, May 3, 1909.

Glasgow Record, April 27, 1909.

Inverness Leader, April 29, 1909.

Starling Observer, April 28, 1909.
Belfast News-Letter April 27, 1909.
Belfast Northern Whig, April 28, 1909.
Dublin Freemasons Journal, April 27, 1909.
Dublin Evening Herald, April 27, 1909.
Dublin Express, April 27, 1909.
Dublin Independent, April 27, 1909.
Baptist, April 29, 1909.
Berwick Advertiser, April 30, 1909.
Berwick Journal, April 29, 1909.
Birmingham Mail, April 26, 1909.
Birmingham Post, April 27, 1909.
Carlisle Evening Journal, April 27, 1909.
Christian Globe, April 27, 1909.
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Christian World, April 29, 1909.
 May 6, 1909.
Daily Chronicle, April 27, 1909.
Daily Sketch, April 27, 1909.
Darlington Echo, May 1, 1909.
Dunbarton Herald, April 28, 1909.
Eastern Daily Press, Norwich, May 3, 1909.
Evening Standard, May 1, 1909.
Globe, April 26, 1909.
Leicester Advertiser, May 1, 1909.
Liverpool Courier, April 27, 1909.
Methodist Recorder, April 29, 1909.
Missionary Record, June, 1909.
Morning Leader, April 27, 1909.

Morning Post, April 27, 1909.

Newcastle Journal, April 27, 1909.

Presbyterian Messenger, June, 1909.

The Standard, April 28, 1909.

Times, April 27, 1909.

Westminster Gazette, April 26, 1909.

Yorkshire Observer, April 27, 1909.

Yorkshire Weekly Observer, May 1, 1909.

Miscellaneous Press Cuttings:

"Pen Portraits from the Past" by O. Smeaton (son of Prof. Smeaton).

Cover of The East United Free Church Magazine, Aberdeen.

APPENDIX A

Note: Extracts from the minutes of various Presbyteries throughout Scotland were sent to Dods' family after his death. These extracts were formerly in the possession of the late Dr. and Mrs. A. Herbert Gray but are now in the possession of Mr. Arthur Alexander Gray. Copies of some of these extracts are given below.

a) UNITED FREE CHURCH PRESBYTERY OF DUNS AND CHIRNSIDE.

Attention having been called to the death of Dr. Marcus Dods, Principal of the New College, Edinburgh, the Presbytery unanimously resolved to place on record, their deep sense of the loss sustained by the Church at large, and especially by their own Church. In Dr. Dods, they recognised one who by his thorough acquaintance with the whole subject of Biblical Criticism, the openness of mind with which he was prepared to welcome light and truth from every quarter and withal by his thorough loyalty to the great truths of Divine Revelation and the Gospel of Jesus Christ, was able under God to exercise a calming guiding and moderating influence during the recent period of enquiry and unrest. For his work as expositor, preacher and teacher, they are deeply grateful to God, and especially for the Spirit of earnest and thorough loyalty to truth with which he was able to inspire the young men under his charges. They render their prayerful sympathy to his bereaved family and relatives to whom they instruct a copy of this Minute to be sent.

Extracted from the Record of the Presbytery,
by

P.G. Hendry, Presbytery Clerk.

b) UNITED FREE PRESBYTERY OF BATHGATE.

The Presbytery record its sense of the great loss sustained by the church in the death of Dr. Marcus Dods, Principal of the New College, Edinburgh. The service which he rendered to the Church of Christ in our time is incalculable. By his life-long industry, by his wise and brave work as a Christian thinker and expositor, by his patient loyalty to truth, Dr. Dods was always an inspiring example to all who knew him or who knew his books. There was in him a grand simplicity and strength and a wonderful loftiness of aim, combined with his great learning, and it was this that made his utterances as minister and teacher so weighty and convincing. A man of God, of singular graciousness and humility, he was the friend and succourer of many.

In giving thanks to God for His good gift in the life and ministry of His servant, the Presbytery desires to tender its deep sympathy to the family of Dr. Dods in their great sorrow.

Extracted from the Minutes of Presbytery
by

Robert Kay, Clerk.

c) UNITED FREE CHURCH PRESBYTERY OF EDINBURGH

The Presbytery desire to place on record their profound sense of the loss sustained through the removal by death, on the 26th ult. of the Rev. Principal Marcus Dods, D.D.

The son of the Rev. Marcus Dods, minister of the Scotch Church, Belford, Dr. Dods was born in 1834, and after passing through the Academy, the University, and New College, Edinburgh, was in due time called to the pastoral oversight of Renfield Church, Glasgow. There for the long period of 25 years, he exercised a remarkable ministry. Diligent study of the word of God, in the light of all recent research, and a cultivated spiritual sense for its meaning and application, rendered him an able upbuilder of the faithful, in truth and godliness; while at the same time a living and widely-informed interest in the thought of the age, fine candour of mind, and a singular capacity of relating Scripture amid all the passing variations of speculation and opinion, to the abiding needs of human nature, gathered round him hearers of the most diverse mental aptitudes and representing very various walks in life, so that his pulpit became a centre of influence, affecting powerfully the thought and life of large classes of the general community. Nor was his influence, as a preacher confined to the city in which he ministered merely, but extended far beyond its borders, making him, under God, a notable instrument for the encouragement of faith in the Gospel in a trying and difficult time.

The service thus rendered by Dr. Dods was confirmed and greatly extended by a lengthened series of published writings which, beginning in his early days as a probationer, continued to appear until shortly before his death. The purport of these was two-fold, the defence of faith in Revealed Religion, and above all, the edifying exposition of Holy Scripture. In both these directions Dr. Dods' great gifts of thought and style, placed him among the most influential religious teachers of the day, and multitudes in all the churches became his debtors.

In 1889 Dr. Dods was called to the Chair of New Testament Literature and Theology in New College, and there, for the closing 20 years of his life he found a congenial sphere for the exercise of his talents. Erudite mastery of his subject, combined with a native gift of imparting knowledge, and an unfailing interest in, and sympathy with growing minds, made him an eminently successful instructor of students; while the standard set for their work was his own, and the example of his loyalty to truth and fidelity to duty, told powerfully upon the formation of their habits and character. In 1907, he was appointed to succeed the venerated Dr. Robert Rainy in the Principalship of the College, and the Church expected much from his discharge of the duties of the office. But God had ordered otherwise. In the summer of the same year Dr. Dods' health failed, and since then, until his death, he was laid aside from active service.

In personal character Dr. Dods was marked by a rare simplicity of nature, great openness and frankness of mind, steadfastness, a pure and very winning devoutness of spirit, and a kindness, which endeared him to a large and affectionate circle of friends. The Presbytery recognise in him a faithful, and much honoured servant of God in his generation, an effective witness, by word and pen, to the truth and grace of Jesus Christ Our Lord, and a confirmer of the faith of many....

Extracted from the Records of the Presbytery of Edinburgh

by

James Harvey, Presbytery Clerk.

d) UNITED FREE CHURCH PRESBYTERY OF KIRKCALDY

4th May, 1909.

The following notice was unanimously adopted in connection with the death of the Rev. Principal Dods, D.D., Edinburgh. The great life-worth of Dr. Dods has been done through his books, his preaching and his teaching in New College. Much of his preaching or the substance of it, has appeared in his published writings, the mere examination of which would occupy some considerable time. Dr. Dods was a leader in liberal thought, and though years up, he was supposed by some to hold too liberal or advanced theological views, he, in later years, came to be recognised as a conservative force of the best kind. As an expositor of Scripture, he had few equals. His interpretation almost always commends itself as thoroughly sane and sensible, for he refused to be carried away by novel ideas or merely clever exegesis. But, great as was the influence exerted by his published writings, his personal influence over his Students, who are influencing the country for good, was undoubtedly greater. They were impressed by his massive intellect, by his wonderful industry, which appeared in his wide reading, his amazing knowledge of books, and by his lectures, which were obviously re-written in part every year that they might be fresh, interesting and abreast of modern research; above all, they were impressed by the transparent truthfulness of his character, evident even in his literary style, which, if it be simple, as a distinguished writer has said, is a style in which the truth can be spoken. His students felt him to be a Real man who, day by day, was making them Christians, and giving them a firm and sure hold of the truth as it is in Christ, and probably Dr. Dods' greatest worth was this, he was a true defender of the faith, a maker of Christian believers in the quiet classroom of New College, and, consequently of hundreds of believers throughout the country. And while today we are without him, we cannot but feel that the College he adorned and the Church he served are much poorer for the loss of such a wise and able teacher.

Extracted by

William McPhie, Presbytery Clerk.

APPENDIX B

NOTE: It is necessary to include a list of books by other members of the Dods family, for in some libraries and bibliographies several of these books are erroneously attributed to Professor Marcus Dods. For example the National Library of Scotland (card catalogue) attributes Forerunners of Dante and The Old Testament Narrative for Schools to the subject of this study, but they were both written by his son, Marcus Dods, M.A.. Similar errors occur in The British Museum Catalogue, the Library of Congress Catalog, and others.

Books by the Father of Professor Marcus Dods.

Dods, Marcus. On the Incarnation of the Eternal Word. London: R.B. Seeley and W. Burnside, 1831.

Dods, Marcus. Anglicanus Scotched. Reply to Letters on the Edinburgh Bible Society, 1828.

Dods, Marcus. Remarks on the Bible; letter to the Edinburgh Corresponding Board, 1828.

Books by the Son of Professor Marcus Dods.

Dods, Marcus, M.A., Forerunners of Dante. Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1903.

Dods, Marcus, M.A., The Old Testament Narrative for Schools. Edinburgh: Thomas Nelson and Sons, 1902.

APPENDIX C

OBSCURE POINTS IN THE CHRONOLOGY OF DODS' LATER LIFE

- a) 1868 Marcus Dods was nominated for one of the vacant chairs in the Free Church College, Edinburgh. He was thirty-four years old.
- Source: Renfield Free Church, Session Minute Book, No. 4, p. 52. "The Session unanimously resolved /at the meeting on 21st April, 1868/ that a congregational meeting be called for Wednesday the 29th at 8:00 to take into consideration what steps should be taken in connection with the nomination of Mr. Dods to one of the vacant chairs in the College of Edinburgh." The only other place where the writer has found a reference to this 1868 nomination is in the British Weekly, May 6, 1909. There in a letter to the editor J. Cunningham writes that in the year 1868 the Presbytery of Glasgow spontaneously endorsed Dods for a vacant Chair in New College. The letter states that later Dods magnanimously withdrew his name in favor of the candidature of a friend, who was in due time elected to the Chair.
- b) 1869 Dods received a call from the congregation of Free St. George's, Edinburgh to become a colleague to Dr. Robert Smith Candlish. Renfield made a stout resistance, and Dods himself said he thought he was "not the kind of man to suit St. George's." In the end the Glasgow Free Presbytery, on the motion of Dr. Robert Buchanan, declined to sustain the call.
- Source: Renfield Free Church, Session Minute Book, No. 4, p. 69. "An edict was duly served by the Presbytery on Sabbath last, calling on the congregation to appear, by their commissioners, at the bar of the Presbytery that they may state reasons, if they have any, why Mr. Dods translation should not take place." Also Glasgow Herald, April 27, 1909 and Dundee Advertiser, April 27, 1909.
- c) 1871 Dods was critically ill during the year 1871. He preached only four times between January and December. While convalescing, he resided in Marshall Meadows, Berwickshire.
- Source: Renfield Free Church, Session Minute Book, No. 4, pp. 115ff. Interview with Mr. Arthur Alexander Gray.
- d) 1871 (Sept.) He married Katherine Swanston, daughter of James Swanston of Marshall Meadows. The wedding portrait of the bride and groom and wedding guests is in the possession of Mr. Arthur Alexander Gray.
- Source: Renfield Free Church, Session Minute Book, No. 4, p. 145. Interview with Mr. Arthur Alexander Gray.

- e) 1873 Dods received his first doctorate at the age of thirty-nine.

Source: Renfield Free Church, Session Minute Book, No. 4, p. 153. The writer has never found this fact of Dods' life mentioned in any published account of his life. His books published after this date all indicate on the title page that he had received the D.D. degree.

- f) 1875 In 1875, when there was a vacancy in the Chair of Divinity in Glasgow College, Dods would, in all probability, have been appointed if he had not written "humbly but decidedly" expressing the opinion that the Church would act wisely in keeping him where he was. The vacancy was filled by the appointment of Dr. A.B. Bruce.

Source: Dundee Advertiser, April 21, 1909; British Monthly 4:187 March, 1904; Daily Review, September 6, 1877 (report of Dr. Adam's speech to Glasgow Free Presbytery); and others. The controversial speeches and pamphlets of 1877-1878 frequently mention his nomination in 1875 as an example of the universal esteem in which he was held. Thus William Mitchell, one of Dods' critics, wrote: "The fact of his having been all but unanimously chosen as one of her professors, although he could not see his way to accept the honour, is sufficient proof of this pre-eminence". p. 11 of Criticism of Dr. Marcus Dods' Sermon, Glasgow, 1877.

The only reference the writer has found to the fact that Dods was twice considered for a Professor's Chair before 1889 is in the Proceedings and Debates, 1889, p. 76. Mr. W. Ross Taylor reminded the Assembly that on two previous occasions the eyes of the Church had turned instinctively to Dods as a man who ought to be in a professor's chair. He did not, however, mention the specific occasions.

- g) 1891 Dods received the honorary degree of D.D. from the University of Edinburgh.

Source: The Fasti of the United Free Church of Scotland edited by John A. Lamb, Dictionary of National Biography Supplement; and others.

- h) 1901 He received the honorary degree of D.D. from the University of Chicago, Ill., U.S.A.

Source: Dods, Later Letters, p. 57; The Fasti of the United Free Church of Scotland by Lamb.

- i) 1901 He made his first trip to the United States, April-July of this year. He lectured in Union Theological Seminary, New York; Bible Teachers College, Montclair, N.J.; University of Chicago; and preached in various other places. During the month of May he preached or lectured about forty times. On several occasions he addressed an audience of 4,000.
- Source: Dods, Later Letters.
- j) 1901 He was nominated for the Moderatorship of the United Free Church, but he would not accept the honor.
- Source: Dods, Later Letters; p. 64; Dundee Advertiser, April 27, 1909; Glasgow Herald, April 27, 1909; and others.
- k) 1902 He delivered a lecture in Oxford on "The Trustworthiness of the Gospels."
- Source: Dods, Later Letters, p. 72.
- l) 1904 He made a second trip to America, where he delivered the Bross Lectures at Lake Forest College, Illinois, and also lectured in the University of Chicago.
- Source: Dods, Later Letters.
- m) 1904 His name was again mentioned for the Moderatorship, but he declined nomination.
- Source: Dundee Advertiser, April 27, 1909; Aberdeen Free Press, April 27, 1909.
- n) 1906 He received another invitation to return to the United States for a series of lectures in Oberlin University, Ohio. He was one of the first asked to deliver the Haskell Foundation lectures there. He accepted this invitation, but later had to cancel this engagement.
- Source: Dods, Later Letters, pp. 205, 213.
- o) 1907 He was appointed Principal of New College 24th May, 1907. His election as Principal, in succession to Dr. Rainy, was moved at the Assembly of 1907 by Dr. Walter Ross Taylor. There was no opposition to his nomination, and a few days later a letter from the new Principal intimating his acceptance of the honour and its responsibilities was read to the Assembly. His health prevented him from ever discharging the duties of the Principalship.
- Source: Glasgow Herald, April 27, 1909; Berwick Advertiser, April 30, 1909.

- p) 1908 After prolonged illness, Dods made an offer in March to resign his Chair, but his resignation was not accepted. In August he intimated his desire to resign both the Principalship and his Chair to the College Committee. The resignation, however, could only be accepted by the General Assembly. Meanwhile, acting on the notice of Dods' intention given by the College Committee, Presbyteries began making nominations for the prospective vacancy.

Source: Berwick Advertiser, April 30, 1909; Dods, Later Letters; Glasgow Evening Citizen, April 26, 1909.

- q) 1909 Dods died at his Edinburgh home, 23 Great King Street, 26th April. His funeral was conducted in St. Andrew's United Free Church, 29th April, and the burial service took place in Dean Cemetery.

Source: Scotsman, April 30, 1909; Glasgow Herald, April 30, 1909.

APPENDIX D

Note: The following information about the portrait of Dods which now hangs in the Senatus Room at New College was taken from copies of speeches formerly in the possession of the late Dr. and Mrs. A. Herbert Gray and also from the Scotsman, May 27, 1909.

On May 26, 1909, a portrait of Marcus Dods by Sir James Guthrie, P.R.S.A. was presented to the United Free Church. The ceremony took place in the New College Library after the adjournment of the General Assembly. The Moderator, Dr. Henderson, was in the chair. Dr. Taylor Innes, Edinburgh, presented the portrait, which had been subscribed for by friends of Dr. Dods. Mr. Carfrae Alston, representing Renfield United Free Church, Glasgow, presented £240, the balance of the amount raised for the portrait, to be devoted to the New Testament Literature Prize Fund in Edinburgh and Glasgow United Free Church Colleges. Professor J.A. Paterson accepted the gifts on behalf of the Senatus.

Following are excerpts from several of the speeches--

The Moderator: ...I certainly had the great privilege of knowing Dr. Dods for a very long time, and I share with every member of the circle of his friends that affection as well as admiration which has been so abundantly expressed at this time when he has been taken from us. I can well remember soon after he went to Renfield Church, my father, who was then frail and up in years and not able to go as far as his own Church, was in the habit of going to Renfield Church. I remember well the delight with which he--a scholarly man and, though I say it, no mean judge of preaching--used to speak of the delight and profit with which he waited on the Ministry of Mr. Marcus Dods, then just settled. We all know that Dr. Dods was not only a man gifted naturally with exceptional ability and with many advantages in his early life, but he was a man who never spared himself in seeking to be better qualified for the office to which he was called in the Ministry of the Gospel, and also in the Professor's Chair. He has left us a great example as a man whose goal was always far ahead of him, and who never on that account gave up his strenuous effort to reach nearer to it

and to be more worthy of what he felt as a Minister of Jesus Christ he would desire to be... his delightful humour--his frankness--his wonderful power of seeing the best in other men--these and other qualities that were known to all his friends have left a memory that is altogether a blessed memory...Dr. Dods' influence and work very largely abide, not only in the books which he has published and his writings, but in the rich and valuable heritage which the Church still possesses in the men and women to whom he was the means of giving a higher thought of what Christian men and women ought to be and...in those Ministers... who had the rare advantage of passing under his care as their teacher and their example.....

Dr. Taylor Innes: Moderator and Members of the Senatus of the New College, some of us had long hoped--hoping latterly against hope--that by the time of the sitting of this Assembly, your late Principal might have been restored to this College, not to the work of his Chair, but perhaps to the duties and office of the Presidency to which the Churches had in vain appointed him. It has seemed otherwise to the All Wise and Good, and we give you today the picture and form of him whose form will not again be seen passing through these Halls. It has been said of Dr. Dods that his very face in the pulpit, and I will add his presence there and the way he squared himself to the work of his office, were in themselves arguments for the truth of Christianity....I have the honour on the part of the Subscribers to present this to the Church and to the College.

Mr. Carfrae Alston: I remember when we came from the country and proposed to settle down under Mr. Dods as he was then, a Clergyman said to me, "You need not do that. He will be taken from you immediately." Many attempts were made to take him from us, but happily he remained there for many a day. Those who have heard him, know what a power he was in the pulpit; he was a great pulpit teacher. Many people no doubt objected to a Minister who read his discourses but it was a fact well known to many Renfield people that those who did not see the paper would scarcely believe that they were being read. His sermons were read most carefully, and they were written most carefully. His reading had a curious power in it--sometimes the repetition of a word or a sentence--and sometimes the tears came in spite of us. Then we think of Dr. Dods at his own fireside. To those of us who were laymen standing on the margin of Bible knowledge and Theology, knowing very little about the one and certainly nothing about the other--we felt we could sit at

the feet of a master who could give us an answer. One remarkable thing about him was, when he did not know, he said so. As you know, Sir, he was accused of being heterodox. A greater mistake could not be made. The young men who listened to Dr. Dods knew that he was not that....